COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

THE LAND USE AND CIRCULATION ELEMENTS
OF THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING (INLAND)

ADOPTED BY
THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
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August 2, 1989	Ord. 2411
April 24, 1990	Ord. 2443
December 11, 1990	Ord. 2488
April 16, 1991	Ord. 2498
August 20, 1991	Ord. 2520
May 5, 1992	Ord. 2544
April 27, 1993	Ord. 2614
September 7, 1993	Ord. 2634
August 23, 1994	Ord. 2686
December 5, 1995	Ord. 2740
October 8, 1996	Ord. 2776
October 19, 1999	Ord. 2882
November 5, 2002	Ord. 2983

PREFACE

Residents of San Luis Obispo County enjoy a rare blend of Mediterranean climate, super physical setting and hospitable living. The county has been fortunate in avoiding many environmental, social and economic problems that have occurred elsewhere in California and the nation. However, continuing population growth encouraged by these amenities has presented the county with the necessity of making far-reaching land use decisions.

We depend upon the land for food and fiber, space to live and work, water supply, wildlife, recreation, waste disposal and other numerous resources. Land use decisions must balance an increasing demand for new areas where development can occur, with the need to preserve the environment upon which the population depends. As a result of competing demands for the use of land, the interest of the public in the development and the use of private land must be clearly defined. The county population will continue to grow, while the amount of land and resources available to accommodate growth are limited.

Decisions to establish new land uses must occur within a regulatory framework that considers the needs of a particular use as well as the characteristics of the development site and its surroundings. Development should assist in maintaining, and hopefully improving the long-term quality and productivity of the land.

This Land Use Element and the accompanying Land Use Ordinance provide the framework for county decisions on land use and development, and represent the values and goals of the county regarding land use. It will be up to both public agencies and the private entrepreneur to implement these values in the future development of the county. Difficult choices will arise, but we must remember that we are planning so that our children, future residents and visitors may continue to enjoy the benefits of San Luis Obispo County we now share.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element (LUE) is a plan describing the official county policy on the location of land uses and their orderly growth and development. The Land Use Element is one of several parts (or elements) of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan. The plan has been prepared in accordance with state law, and has been adopted by the county Board of Supervisors. The LUE coordinates policies and programs in other county general plan elements that affect land use, and provides policies and standards for the management of growth and development in each unincorporated community and the rural areas of the county. The LUE also serves as a reference point and guide for future land use planning studies throughout the county.

Authority

California law requires each county to establish a planning agency to develop and maintain a comprehensive long-term general plan. The Government Code (Section 65302a) mandates a land use element designating the proposed general distribution, general location and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, including agriculture, natural resources, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other categories of public and private uses of the lands. The land use element is to include standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the territory covered by the plan, and is also to identify areas subject to flooding, which must be reviewed annually.

Scope and Purpose

The state guidelines for the preparation of general plans encourage the Land Use Element to include:

1. Identification of land use issues.

2. Land use policies and proposals, distinguishing among any short, middle and long-term periods of fulfillment.

3. A description of land uses and land use intensities, including the relationships of such uses to social, environmental and economic goals and objectives.

4. Standards and criteria for physical development within each use area with consideration for land capacity.

5. A description of the land use pattern, including text and a diagram or other graphic such as a map.

6. An outline for implementation, describing measures necessary to achieve land use objectives and policies, and the timing or staging of plan implementation.

General plans are implemented primarily through zoning and subdivision regulations. Implementation of general plan policies also occurs through government activities such as capital improvement programs, public works, property acquisition, tax programs, and through voluntary actions of the private sector. State law requires zoning and land divisions to be consistent with the adopted general plan.

A. GENERAL GOALS

The following goals describe the fundamental purposes for the Land Use Element and Circulation Element. These general goals provide the basis for defining the 13 land use categories and for determining the land areas to which they are applied. More detailed goals, objectives and policies that address specific planning issues are presented in the other chapters of this report and in the area plans. The provisions of the Land Use and Circulation Elements are designed to carry out these goals. Proposed amendments to specific policies or the land use category maps should also carry out these goals. The policies and provisions of the Land Use Element should:

Environment

1. Maintain and protect a living environment that is safe, healthful and pleasant for all residents by conserving nonrenewable resources and replenishing renewable resources.

2. Balance the capacity for growth allowed by the Land Use Element with the sustained availability of resources.

Air Quality

3. Preserve and protect the air quality of the county by seeking to attain and maintain state and federal ambient air quality standards.

4. Determine, and mitigate where feasible, the potential adverse air quality impacts of new development.

5. Minimize the generation of air pollutants from projected growth by implementing land use policies and programs that promote and encourage the use of transportation alternatives to the single-passenger vehicle and minimize travel distance and trip generation.

Population Growth

6. Provide for a sustainable rate of orderly development within the planned capacities of resources and services and the county's and citizens' financial ability to provide them.

Distribution of Land Uses

7. Encourage an urban environment that is an orderly arrangement of buildings, structures and open space appropriate to the size and scale of development for each community.

8. Maintain a distinction between urban and rural development by providing for rural uses outside of urban and village areas which are predominately agriculture, low-intensity recreation, residential and open space uses, which will preserve and enhance the pattern of identifiable communities.

9. Identify important agricultural, natural and other rural areas between cities and communities and work with landowners to maintain their rural character.

10. Encourage the protection of agricultural land for the production of food, fiber, and other agricultural commodities.

Phasing of Urban Development

11. Design and maintain a land use pattern and population capacity that is consistent with the capacities of existing public services and facilities, and their programmed expansion where funding has been identified.

12. Encourage the phasing of urban development in a compact manner, first using vacant or underutilized "infill" parcels and lands next to existing development.

Residential Land Uses

13. Locate urban residential densities within urban or village reserve lines near employment areas, while protecting residential areas from incompatible and undesirable uses.

Commercial and Industrial Land Uses

14. Designate a pattern of strategically located commercial and/or industrial areas compatible with overall land use that is convenient to patrons, realistically related to market demand and the needs of the community, and near areas designated for residential use.

Public Services and Facilities

15. Provide additional public resources, services and facilities to serve existing communities in sufficient time to avoid overburdening existing resources, services and facilities.

16. Avoid the use of public resources, services and facilities beyond their renewable capacities, and monitor new development to ensure that its resource demands will not exceed existing and planned capacities or service levels.

17. Finance the cost of additional services and facilities from those who benefit by providing for dedications, in-lieu fees or exactions.

18. Locate new and additional public service facilities on existing public lands where feasible, allowing for sufficient buffers to protect adjacent rural and agricultural areas.

Circulation

19. Integrate land use and transportation planning in coordination with cities to ensure that traffic and transportation demands can be safely and adequately accommodated.

20. Design a transportation system that provides safety within feasible economic and technical means, preserves important natural resources and features, promotes the esthetic quality of the region and minimizes adverse environmental changes.

Administration

21. Work toward minimizing administrative delays and costs to fee payers in the administration of the Land Use Element. Simplify development review procedures and provide incentives for development to locate where plan policies encourage it to occur.

22. Work closely with cities to provide continuity between city and county land use planning and to achieve common land use goals through reciprocal agreements.

B. PLANNING APPROACH

The Land Use Element has been designed to support county land use decisions as part of a dynamic process instead of being a rigid, static plan. To achieve that objective, the LUE has been structured and is used differently than traditional land use plans and zoning. As in previous plans, land use maps illustrate long-term land use and growth policies, but they are now also used to evaluate current development proposals in much the same way as former district maps of the zoning ordinance. The LUE also accommodates a more detailed periodic review of its policies, and updating of supporting information in response to changing conditions.

In conjunction with the LUE, the Land Use Ordinance (LUO) provides comprehensive development standards and review procedures.

Together, the Land Use Element and Land Use Ordinance are an integrated land use policy and regulatory system. The LUE establishes where land uses may be located through the designation of land use categories. The LUO establishes which uses are allowed in each land use category and regulates site design and development. No use required to have a permit by the LUO can be approved unless it is consistent with the Land Use Element. In general, the LUE and LUO allows a wider range of land uses than previous zoning, which attempted to maintain harmonious land uses by rigidly segregating uses in separate districts. The performance standards of the Land Use Ordinance ensure compatibility of adjacent uses. The LUE and LUO are together a growth management system that directs the amount, type and intensities of development into specific areas.

During the studies that produced the structure and procedures of the Land Use Element, land use policies were formulated through review of two kinds of information. First, existing county land use policies were accepted as the foundation for the document. Before the Land Use Element, county land use policies were in various general plan elements, individual community plans and adopted specific plans (see "Relationship to Other Adopted Plans."). The LUE did not attempt to redefine those policies, but incorporated them into a more consistent framework. Changes occurred only where current information showed clear shifts in local conditions, invalidating previous policy decisions. Information that supported the review of existing policy was a broad data base on both natural and man-made features of the county landscape. The data provide a current perspective on county economic, social and physical conditions affecting land use. Characteristics considered included natural features (vegetation, soils, slopes and hazards); and man-made features (existing land use, parcel sizes, ownership patterns, and current zoning). The policies of the Land Use Element resulted from all those factors.

C. ORGANIZATION OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element has three major sections: Framework for Planning, the area plans and the official maps. The Circulation Element of the General Plan is included in the Land Use Element with text and map references within these sections.

Framework for Planning - Inland Area

Part I of the LUE, Framework for Planning, contains policies and procedures that apply to the unincorporated area outside the coastal zone, defining how the LUE is used together with the Land Use Ordinance and other adopted plans.

Framework for Planning is only used in reviewing development and land division proposals as follows:

1. The descriptions of purpose and character for each land use category in Chapter 6 and the density and building intensity criteria are used to review proposed amendments to the LUE and to review individual development projects proposed in existing land use categories.

2. The parcel size ranges, density and building intensity criteria in Chapter 6 are used with Chapter 22.22 of the Land Use Ordinance to establish parcel size standards and review proposed land divisions for general plan consistency.

Framework for Planning also explains the criteria used in applying land use categories and combining designations to the land, and the operation of the Resource Management System. Combining designations are special map categories that identify areas of unique resources or potential hazards that necessitate more careful project review. (For example, areas that may experience flooding are included in the Flood Hazard combining designation to show where special construction techniques are needed.)

The Resource Management System (RMS), Chapter 3, is designed to assist county decision-makers by anticipating increasing needs for resources created by growth. The RMS assesses capacities of existing critical resources, and the timing for providing or upgrading resource delivery facilities. Such improvements are then accomplished by either the public or private sectors. The RMS is intended to support timely addition to a resource, or growth rate adjustment where a resource shortage would require longer to correct than remaining capacity allows.

The Area Plans

Part II of the Land Use Element is comprised of 11 area plans which correspond to the planning areas illustrated in Figure 1-1. The area plans refine the general policies of Framework for Planning into separate land use issues and policies for each community. The area plans also discuss local population growth and economic conditions, public services and circulation (Amended 1990, Ord. 2471).

Land Use Element users can review the map in Figure 1-1 to find their planning area.

The area plans describe where the land use categories are applied, and indicate policies and development criteria for each community in the form of programs.

Programs

Programs are actions that may be initiated by the county or other identified public agency to achieve specific community or areawide objectives. Because programs (some of which include special studies) are recommended actions rather than mandatory requirements, county implementation should be based on consideration of community needs and substantial community support for the program and its related cost. Standards are criteria that must be satisfied in development planning and construction to achieve consistency with the general plan.

The Official Maps

As Part III of the Land Use Element, the Official Maps are on file in the county Department of Planning and Building. They show how the land use categories and combining designations are applied to each parcel of land in the county. The area plans contain land use maps for the urban, village and rural portions of each planning area for general information only. The Official Maps must be used to determine precisely what land use designations apply to particular properties.

D. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ADOPTED PLANS

A Land Use Element for all unincorporated portions of the county was first adopted in 1941. It was later updated in 1947, and in 1966 when the Board of Supervisors adopted the Composite Land Use Plan, including all previous community plans with general county goals and standards. The Land Use Element has since been amended and updated in a major revision concluded in September, 1980, with adoption of the plan in its current structure.

A major goal of this Land Use Element is to achieve internal consistency among the various elements of the county general plan. This Land Use Element supersedes all land use plans previously adopted by the county, including general plans for unincorporated communities and county-adopted plans prepared by the cities, but it does not replace any of the other countywide general plan elements. Instead, the LUE complements the other elements by incorporating and implementing their land use concerns and recommendations.

The LUE refines the Agriculture and Open Space Element by establishing land use densities which were not originally included, and also implements the Conservation, Historic, Safety, Economic, Energy, and Recreation Elements by incorporating their broad-brush land use recommendations into detailed policies and standards applicable to specific geographic locations.

The LUE also includes the Circulation Element of the general plan. Framework for Planning contains general goals and policies. The Circulation Chapters of the area plans contain recommended objectives and projects. Circulation Maps in the area plans show existing and proposed collector and arterial streets.

In addition to collecting the land use policies of the various countywide general plan elements, the Land Use Element also is coordinated with the most recently adopted city general plans for land use within incorporated city limits. County policy recognizes that land use problems and opportunities have effects which do not stop at political boundaries, and that such issues can be adequately resolved only through cooperation between affected agencies. While a city general plan may include lands beyond the city limits, the county Land Use Element will be the policy administered by the county for development in unincorporated fringe areas. The city plans will still prevail within city limits.

E. SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS

If any chapter, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase or word of the Land Use Element is for any reason held to be invalid, unconstitutional or unenforceable, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the Land Use Element. It is hereby declared that this Land Use Element and each chapter, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase and word thereof would have been adopted irrespective of the fact that one or more of such portions of the Land Use Element be declared invalid, unconstitutional or unenforceable.

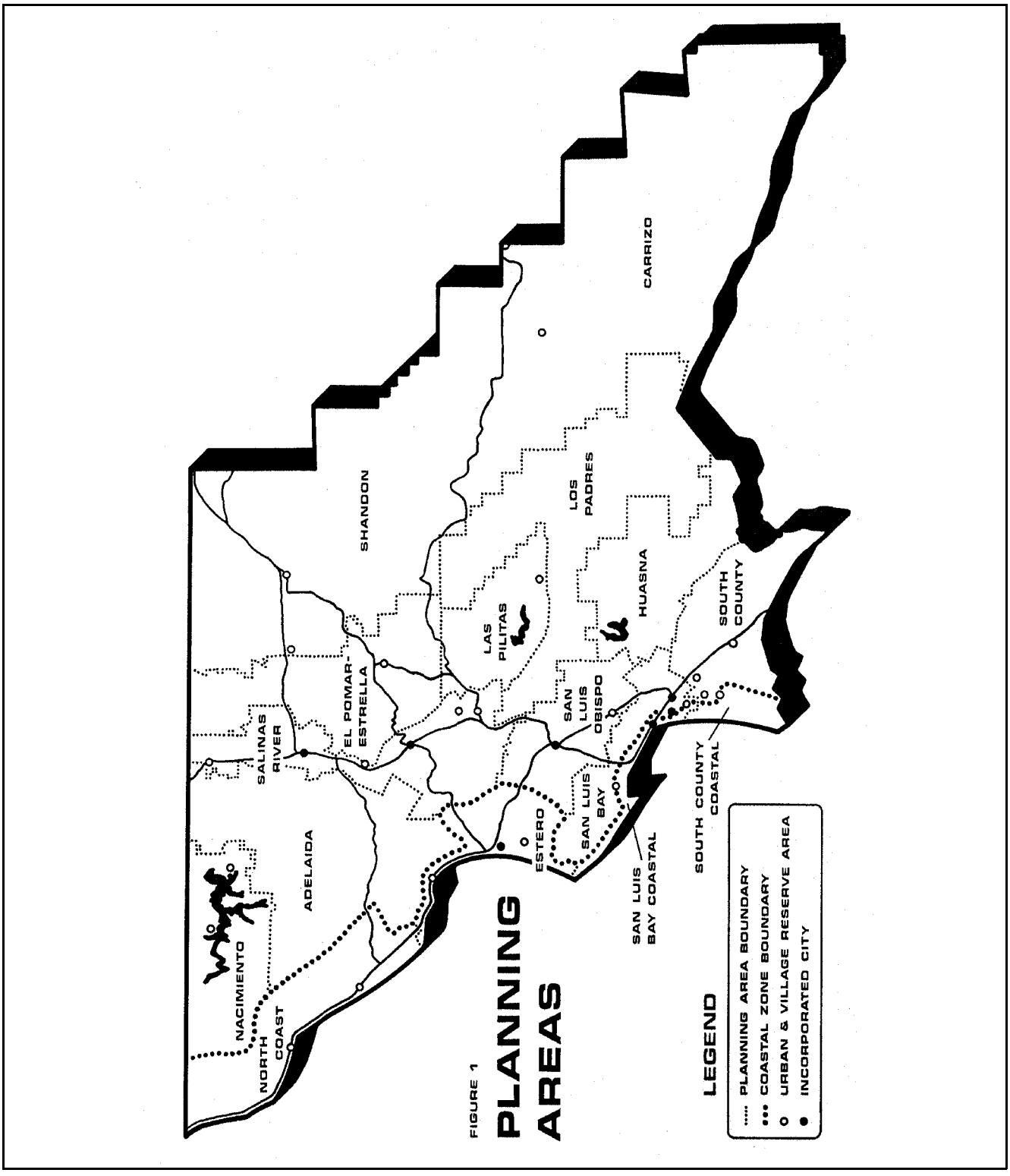


Figure 1-1: Planning Areas

CHAPTER 2: INFORMATION BASE

Gathering and evaluating data about the population, economy and environment has always been an important step in formulating land use policies. This provides a brief overview of these three information components reviewed in preparing the Land Use Element. The data presented here is for information only, and none of the statements shall be construed as county policy for the purpose of evaluating development proposals or the consistency of land divisions.

Accurate data on current county conditions is vital to an effective planning process. The characteristics of the county's physical environment have been reviewed as an important determinant of the land capabilities and constraints. Government agencies have observed trends in population growth and employment to identify needs and proper locations for public services and facilities. Likewise, trends in land use (such as expanding urban areas and intensification of agriculture) were evaluated to determine their effects on the capacity of natural systems and public services.

Population, economic and land use trends are also useful to private enterprise in identifying the location and extent of potential markets. As population growth continues, needs for government services and facilities increase. Such trends must be monitored and their impacts anticipated to ensure public needs will be met in a timely manner by both the public and private sectors.

A. PHYSICAL SETTING

Though the policies of the Land Use Element are related to the population and economy, the principal consideration in LUE policy formulation has been the characteristics, capabilities and constraints of the county's physical environment. As a basis for Land Use Element policy definition, detailed information on the physical setting of each planning area was developed. Physical features including soils, slopes, hazards and areas of critical concern were all reviewed. The following sections briefly describe the important physical features of the county, later detailed in the area plans.

Land

The county landscape is defined by five mountain ranges, forming five principal drainage basins aligned on a predominantly northwest to southeast axis. The ranges include the Santa Lucia, Temblor, Caliente, La Panza and San Luis mountains. While none of the ranges is particularly high, they are effective visual and climatic barriers between each of the regions they define. Most urban and intensive agricultural uses in the county occur in the valleys and coastal terraces of the westernmost ranges. A more detailed discussion of the physical features of the county can be found in the Agriculture and Open Space Element.

Review of land use changes during the past decade indicates definite trends in growth and development. Table A summarizes those changes and shows that increasing conversion of unused land to agricultural production has been accompanied by conversion of agricultural land to urban uses (source: State Department of Water Resources, "Southern Central Coastal Land Use Survey, 1985"). The associated construction activities can be accompanied by erosion problems, siltation of waterways and the loss of soil resources. In addition to a physical loss of arable soil, a loss of land productivity has resulted from the division of properties into parcels too small for economically viable commercial agricultural production. The Agriculture and Open Space Element refers to such areas as "Small

Lot Rural." The increasing division of agriculturally productive land into rural homesites is a significant trend because of its potential for continuing and accelerating the displacement of agriculture as both a land use and an employment base. In 1985, county agricultural lands totaled 62,280 acres of irrigated and 341,730 acres of non-irrigated land (see Table A) (source: San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioners Annual Reports). These areas include both high quality soils (Class I & II), and other agricultural lands of lesser capability, which nevertheless may be economically productive partly because of sheer size. The land demands of anticipated population and economic growth must be balanced with the needs of viable agriculture for areas free from conflicting land uses.

The scenic qualities of the county landscape are what much of the incoming population finds inviting. Ironically, those qualities are the first affected by population increases. Areas of the county with unique wildlife and plant communities, mineral resources or scenic qualities could be altered, or the special resource could be eliminated entirely as a result of rapid population growth accompanied by inappropriate development.

Air Quality

The primary factors affecting air quality in San Luis Obispo County are: (1) the prevailing climatic conditions; (2) the topographic and geographic features of the region; and, (3) the quality, type and location of pollutant emissions.

The climate of San Luis Obispo County is directly related to geographic characteristics. The coastal lowlands and plains are bounded on the east by the Santa Lucia mountains and experience a maritime climate. That climate is somewhat modified locally by elevation and distance from the ocean, and by the intermediate San Luis mountain range. The north and northeastern portions of the county include the upper end of the Salinas Valley, where the maritime climate is substantially modified by the intervening mountains. The Carrizo Plain in the east and southeastern portion of the county is climatically a high desert.

The regional climate in coastal San Luis Obispo County is strongly influenced by the Pacific Ocean. A high pressure area or system is commonly located over the ocean, which tends to enhance afternoon and evening onshore winds. This effect is reduced inland. A significant characteristic of the high pressure system that affects air quality is temperature inversions.

TABLE A

COMPARISON OF 1968, 1977 AND 1985 LAND USE (in Acres)

Type of Land Use	1968	% Change 1968-77	1977	1985	% Changes 1977-85
Urban and Suburban					
Residential	6,310	134	14,760	22,200	50
Commercial	1,180	150	2,420	2,710	12
Industrial	220	100	440	2,890	557
Unsegregated[1]	6,490	-20	5,210	7,550	45
Other[2]	6,960	96	13,610	15,410	13
GROSS URBAN AND SUBURBAN AREA	21,160	72	36,440	50,760	39
Irrigated Arigulture					
Alfalfa	13,720	55	21,250	15,020	-29
Pasture	9,120	-39	5,530	6,040	9
Citrus & Subtropical	480	235	1,610	2,500	55
Vegetable Crops	8,480	34	11,370	16,480	45
Field Crops	6,420	42	9,100	3,320	-64
Deciduous Fruits & Nuts	690	25	860	1,210	41
Small Grains	750	52	1,140	1,260	11
Vineyards	30	1,303	3,940	7,280	85
Fallow	3,340	-90	350	4,710	1,246
Other[3]	3,550	-14	3,040	4,460	47
GROSS IRRIGATED[5] AGRICULTURE	46,580	25	58,200	62,280	7
Non-Irrigated Agriculture	277,200	26	348,990	341,730	-2
Unsegregated native Classes[4]	1,781,450	-6	1,682,760	1,669,860	-.7
GROSS NON-IRRIGATED AREA	2,058,650	-1	2,031,750	2,011,590	-.9
TOTALS	2,126,390		2,126,397[5]	2,124,630[6]	

NOTES: (for Table)

1. Dairies, farmsteads, livestock ranches, parks, cemeteries and golf courses.
2. Oilfields, tank farms, vacant lots, quarries, gravel pits, warehouses, storage yards, railroad rights-of-way, public streets, landing strips or airfields, and miscellaneous paved areas.
3. Public highways and roads, farm access roads, canals, and other inclusions not devoted to crop production, including irrigated idle and abandoned lands.
4. Native grasses, brush, and trees, including phreatophytes. Bare ground, including river washes, beaches, and water surfaces.
5. Source: "Central Coastal Land Use Study 1977," State Department of Water Resources, Southern District, January 1979.
6. Source: "Southern Central Coast Land use Survey, 1985," State Department of Water Resources, Southern District, January, 1987.
7. Total survey acreages vary from the San Luis Obispo County total of 2,122,240 acres by approximately 0.1% due to the methods of the Department of Water Resources in compiling individual land use date.

A temperature inversion occurs when there is relatively little "mixing" or circulation between separate layers of air in the atmosphere. Consequently, an air mass at a high elevation can effectively form a lid (called an inversion layer), which traps an air mass of a different temperature below it, also trapping any pollutants that may be in the lower air mass. County weather is characterized and dominated by inversion layers. The inversion layer may be intensified by high pressure system conditions of strong onshore flows of cool ocean air.

While the county can generally be described as a single air basin, it often becomes several sub-basins. The terrain configuration of valleys bordered by mountains is common in most urban areas of the county. Coupled with the periodic presence of inversion layers, the terrain creates multiple basins that can be isolated from external air circulation for several days at a time. The California Air Resources Board has indicated the height of inversion layers over some portions of the county may be lower than in any other part of the state: 1,000 to 2,500 feet over the Salinas Valley, but as low as 250 feet over the coastal lowlands. The inversion conditions often limit the dispersion of pollutants from the population centers located in valley areas, and have the potential for creating serious air quality problems.

The conditions most conducive to poor air quality in the county generally occur when the high pressure system has weakened or moved inland to the east. This can produce a "Santa Ana" condition which transports air (usually pollutant-laden) from the southeast. The breakup of a Santa Ana condition often leads to relatively stagnant conditions and a buildup of pollutants. This situation is probably the most important for producing high ozone concentrations in San Luis Obispo County. On a regional basis, ozone is the pollutant of greatest concern in the county, particularly within the coastal plateau.

Ozone is formed in the atmosphere by complex reactions involving pollutants and sunlight. The amount of ozone formed depends upon both the concentration of pollutants and the intensity and duration of sunlight. Motor vehicles, industrial and commercial combustion sources, and urban and rural burning are the principal sources of pollutants that contribute to ozone formation.

San Luis Obispo County is currently designated as an attainment or unclassified area for all pollutants regulated under the National Air Quality Standards. However, periodic violations of the State standards for ozone and particulate matter are recorded each year at several locations in the county. Ozone concentrations exceeding the federal standard are also occasionally measured. If violations of the National Ozone Standard become more frequent, the region could be redesignated as a non-attainment area for ozone. This would necessitate the imposition of restrictive and costly regulatory measures to bring the county back into compliance with the mandates of the Federal Clean Air Act.

Motor vehicles have historically represented about 50% of the ozone pollutant emissions generated in the county. That proportion has risen in recent years, and will continue to increase as the population increases, potentially aggravating an existing air quality problem. Careful and informed planning can prevent the occurrence of future problems. Land use decisions for the protection of the air quality resource must be implemented far in advance to effectively avoid significant deterioration of the resource in the future. For that reason, air quality has been included in the Resource Management System (RMS), Chapter 3. The intent is to track emissions and ambient air quality in the planning areas to provide an early alert system before air quality levels are noticeably degraded. Control measures recommended in the Air Pollution Control District's Quality Attainment and Maintenance Plan (AQAMP) will be proposed for implementation as necessary when a given alert level is reached. The district is currently in the process of performing a comprehensive update to the AQAMP.

Water

As the county's population and economy grow, the demands on water resources increase. The dependable water supply has already been exceeded in some areas of the county. Development of additional supplies from sources within the county, and/or imported water from outside the county is required.

At the present time, water for urban uses in the county is obtained either from surface impoundments such as Santa Margarita Lake, Whale Rock and Lopez reservoirs, or from natural underground basins (aquifers). Water for agricultural uses comes almost entirely from aquifer groundwater supplies.

Figure 2-1 shows the locations of the major groundwater basins in the county. The estimated storage capacity, usable storage and dependable supply for each of those basins are listed in Table B. The dependable supply from a groundwater basin is the maximum quantity of water that can be continuously withdrawn from a groundwater basin without adverse effect. The dependable supply of some county groundwater basins is already being exceeded. If mining of groundwater continues in those areas without allowing aquifers to recharge, water supply and water quality problems will eventually result, which may be costly to correct and could become irreversible.

The estimated storage capacity, usable storage and dependable supply for each of those basins are listed in Table B.

According to the county Master Water Plan Update (1986), the overall demand for water is expected to remain about the same through the year 2010. Urban demand is expected to increase between 67% and 88% depending on conservation measures. However, agricultural use is projected to decrease by approximately 14% due to improved irrigation efficiency and a trend toward crops requiring less water. While agriculture presently uses about 84% of total countywide water, it is anticipated to comprise 72% of the county's use by 2010. It should be noted, however, that much of the water used by agriculture is returned to the groundwater supply and is not "used up" per se. The use of this water is essential for on-going agricultural uses, including the production of food and fiber, so this water is beneficial to the population of the county as well as the state and nation. Since agriculture uses a larger volume of water than urban uses, the small percentage decrease in agricultural use is estimated to offset the increase in urban demand. Further discussion of policy issues relating to water resources, and an assessment of the water resources and the population levels they can support, is found in the Resource Management System, Chapter 3. Local conditions and policies are described in the separate area plans. Additional background information on water resources can be found in the Agriculture and Open Space Element, the Conservation Element and the Master Water and Sewerage Plan.

TABLE B

SUMMARY OF GROUNDWATER BASIN CHARACTERISTICS[1]

Study Area	Storage Capacity (acre-feet*)	Usable Storage (acre-feet)	Estimated Dependable Supply (acre-feet/yr.)
North Coastal			
Arroyo de la Cruz	6,600	2,200	430
San Carpoforo Creek	1,800	600	-
San Simeon Creek	4,000	1,300	900 [2]
Santa Rosa Creek	24,700	6,000	2,260 [2]
Central Coastal			
Cayucos Creek	4,000	1,300	630
Los Osos	270,000 [3]	14,000	variable [4]
Morro Creek and Chorro Creek	33,900 [7]	-	5,300 [7]
Old Creek	4,600	1,500	660***
Toro Creek	2,900	1,000	530
Villa Creek	6,500	2,200	1,030
San Luis Bay			
San Luis Obispo	67,000 [3]	22,000 [3]	2,250
South Coastal			
Arroyo Grande/Plain	1,700,000 [3]	8,500 [5]	8,300 [5]
Nipomo Mesa Area		172,000	6,090 [5]
Pismo	30,000 [3]	10,000 [3]	2,000
Santa Maria**	2,100,000 [5]	45,600	36,500 [5]
Upper Salinas			
Paso Robles**	30,060,000 [6]	26,520,000	47,000 [6]
Pozo	2,000	2,000	1,000

TABLE B

SUMMARY OF GROUNDWATER BASIN CHARACTERISTICS[1]

Study Area	Storage Capacity (acre-feet*)	Usable Storage (acre-feet)	Estimated Dependable Supply (acre-feet/yr.)
Cuyama/Carrizo Plain			
Carrizo Plain	400,000 [3]	100,000 [3]	600 [3]
Cuyama****	2,100,000 [3]	100,000 [3]	6,600

NOTES:

* Total storage capacity represents potential basin volume rather than actual water in storage or usable basin capacity.

** Basin extends into adjoining counties. Quantities given are portions within San Luis Obispo County.

*** Released from Whale Rock Reservoir under agreement with Whale Rock Commission.

**** Tri-county basin capacity.

Sources:

1. Unless otherwise noted, information is from the San Luis Obispo County Master Water Plan Update, 1986. California State Department of Water Resources in cooperation with San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, March 1986.

2. Report on Proposed Water System Improvements and Master Plan, Cambria County Water District, February 1976.

3. "California's Groundwater," Department of Water Resources Bulletin 18; 1975.

4. Geohydrology and Management of the Los Osos Area, California State Department of Water Resources, October, 1988.

   Hydrology and Water Resources in the Los Osos Valley Groundwater Basin, San Luis Obispo, California, U.S. Geological Survey Water Survey and Water Resource Investigation Report 88-4081, 1988.

5. Ground Water in the Arroyo Grande Area, Califoria State Department of Water Resources Report, June 1979.

6. Groundwater in the Paso Robles Basin, California State Department of Water Resources District Report, March 1979, p. 10.

7. Morro Bay Area Water Management Plan, California State Department of Water Resources District Report, September, 1982.

8. Nipomo Mesa Planning Study: Water, Wastewater and Drainage Studies, Lawrence, Fiske and McFarland, August 24, 1987.

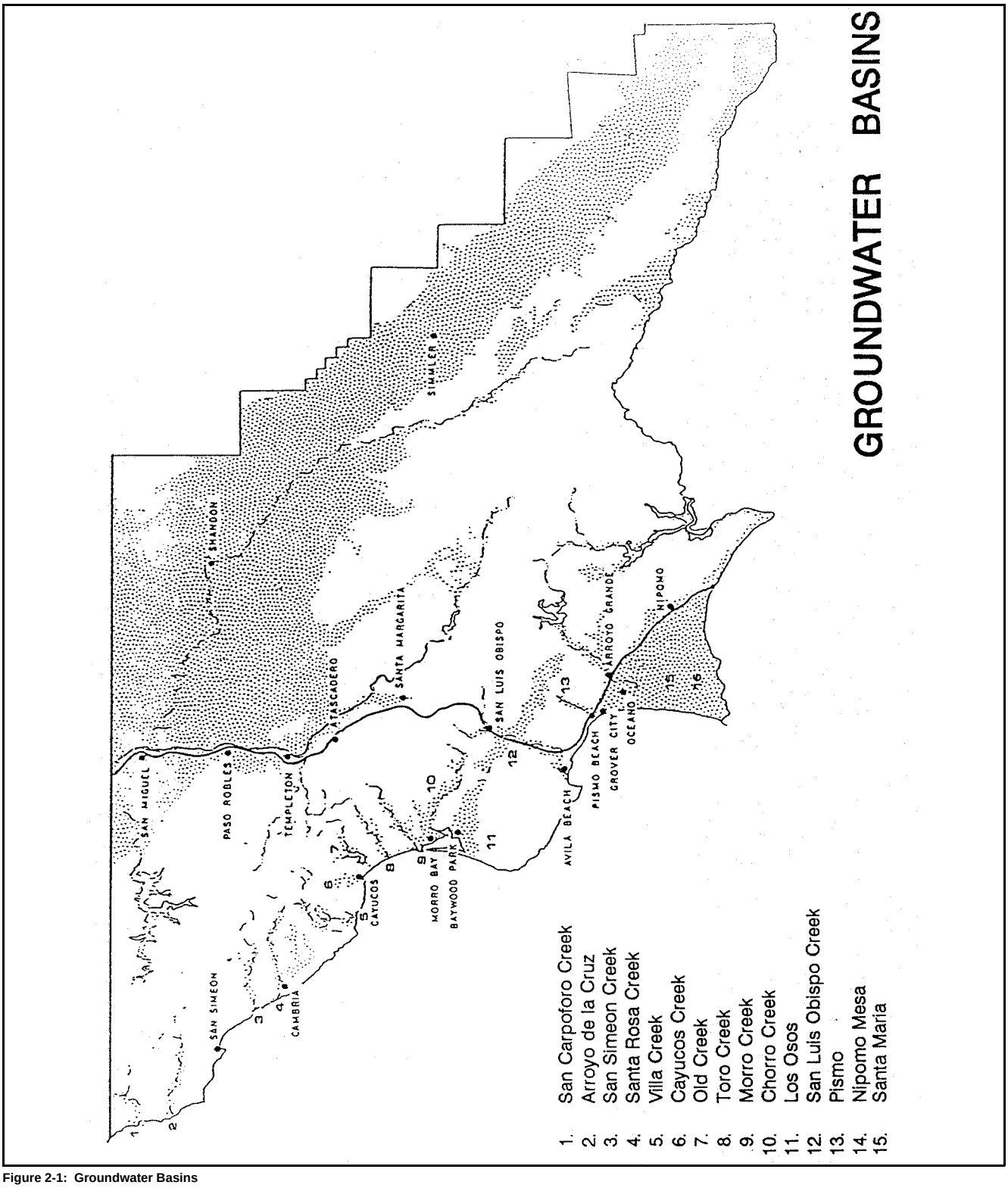


Figure 2-1: Groundwater Basins

B. POPULATION

The population of the county is concentrated in four regions, each relating to distinct physical and trade areas:

North County - The area north of Cuesta Grade generally centered on the Salinas River, containing the communities of San Miguel, Paso Robles, Templeton, Atascadero and Santa Margarita. This area is considered in the Land Use Element as the Salinas River planning area.

North Coast - The coastal terrace and adjacent upland areas south of the Monterey County line, including the communities of San Simeon, Cambria, Cayucos, Morro Bay and South Bay (the North Coast and Estero Planning Areas).

San Luis Obispo - The inland area surrounding the county seat which is the major employment and trade center of the county, but also includes the resort community of Avila Beach.

South County - The coastal terrace, upland and near-coast valleys concentrated along Highway 101, extending from Ontario Grade south to the Santa Barbara County line, including the communities of Pismo Beach, Arroyo Grande, Grover City, Oceano, Halcyon and Nipomo (the San Luis Bay and South County planning areas).

San Luis Obispo County's population growth, although fluctuating at times, was relatively slow until 1940 when the population exceeded 33,000. The population grew to 51,417 in 1950, and another 29,627 residents were added by 1960, increasing by 57.6% to a total of 81,044. However, the decade of the 1960s displayed a somewhat declining growth rate, with a 1970 population of 105,690, an increase of 30.4% over 1960.

From 1970 to 1980, the annual population growth rate of the county fluctuated widely, from a low of 2.2% to a high of 5.3% annually. During this time period the county growth rate was substantially higher than the statewide average of 1.4% per year.

Since 1980, the average annual growth rate was 3.8% varying between 2% to 4.8% until July, 1987. The average state growth rate increased to 2.1% during this time. Table C summarizes the actual county population growth rate from 1970 to 1987, and also contains county and state growth projections to the year 2010. As shown in the table, the county is expected to continue growing substantially faster than the state. However, that faster growth may not continue unless resource delivery systems are significantly expanded. While the county will continue to be attractive to new residents, increasing uncertainty about natural resource capacities may inhibit continued growth at the present rate. Appendix A shows the population projections for planning areas and communities within the county.

Development Potential Resulting from the Land Use Element

The question of how much land development and corresponding population growth the Land Use Element will allow can be examined in several ways. Each area plan contains data about the absorption capacity and build-out capacity for the amount of acreage within residential land use categories (where primary residences are allowed). These estimates are expressed as population in order to compare with projected growth rates. A third measure of potential population is holding capacity, which describes the projected population threshold when a resource capacity will be exceeded and is often used in the Resource Management System.

Absorption Capacity. Absorption capacity is the potential total population that would result from unconstrained growth and full development of all land within the county to the maximum extent permitted within each land use category. The absorption capacity is not anticipated to be reached during the 20 year term of the plan. In reality, the absorption capacity is an unattainable population since most existing development will not be replaced at maximum density, new development will not always occur to its maximum potential, and necessary services (sewer, water, etc.) may not be available to support the maximum density.

Build-Out Capacity. Build-out capacity is an estimate of the likely ultimate population that can be expected within the land use categories for each area plan, including any limitations on density imposed by LUO standards. It represents the beginning of a transition from a growing population to a stable, slower growing population as most of the area's parcels are developed. As developable parcels become more scarce, they become more expensive and less likely to be developed, unless the supply is increased through plan amendments for higher densities. Build-out population estimates indicate the threshold when a scarcer supply of land and physical development constraints interfere with full development of each land use category's maximum absorption capacity. Other assumptions that account for the build-out estimate include:

1. Resistance by owners of existing development to intensify or increase density to the maximum permitted;

2. Topographic and other site limitations; and

3. Development of roads and streets.

Build-out capacity is not a firm estimate because each community will build out to a different degree, depending on such factors as its desirability, local business development or convenience to other area marketing and employment centers. The primary value of the build-out capacity estimate is as an indicator of the long-term effects of land use policies on the economy, particularly in terms of the plan providing opportunities for new development.

The build-out capacity of the unincorporated area outside city Urban Reserve Lines (URL'S) is approximately 238,000 people. The build-out capacity within city URL'S is approximately 181,000 as of 1988, therefore the total county build-out is approximately 419,000 people.

The estimated build-out capacity for each subarea of the county is found in the area plans of the Land Use Element and in Appendix B. Appendix B also contains estimated dates that the build-out of individual communities or areas is projected to occur, using population projections in Appendix A, which assumes adequate resources and services and unconstrained growth.

Holding Capacity. Holding capacity represents the maximum population that could be accommodated not only by the policy constraints of the Land Use Element, but also by the resources available to support the population. As such, the holding capacity is a more realistic assessment of the maximum growth that could occur during the term of the Land Use Element. From a countywide perspective, holding capacity is most directly related to how much water will be available.

The estimated maximum population of about 150,000 that can be served without overdrafting existing developed water supplies has been exceeded (more related to the location of available supplies than the actual capacities of county water resources). The Resource Management chapter of each area plan shows the population levels at which additional resources will be needed if more people are to be accommodated. The Resource Management System, discussed in Chapter 3, utilizes resource capacity studies to determine the holding capacities for each planning area and community. The 1986 Master Water Plan also identifies the necessary supplemental water projects that can be developed to serve the Land Use Element build-out capacity.

TABLE C

COMPARISON OF COUNTY AND STATE POPULATION GROWTH RATES, ACTUAL AND PROJECTED

Year	Unincorporated Area Growth Rate (%)	Countywide Growth[1] Rate (%)	State Growth[2] Rate (%)
Actual			
1970-71		3.9	1.6
71-72		2.6	0.7
72-73		4.7	1.1
73-74		5.3	1.2
74-75		3.8	1.4
75-76		2.8	1.5
76-80		4.5	2.4
1980-81	2.5	2.0	2.5
81-82	5.0	3.5	2.2
82-83	4.2	2.6	2.1
83-84	3.8	3.5	1.9
84-85	5.9	5.0	2.2
85-86	2.7	4.0	2.4
86-87	2.7	3.2	2.5
87-88	3.4	3.1	2.5
Projected [3]			
1985-1990		4.0	2.1
1990-1995		3.3	1.5
1990-1995		3.3	1.5
1995-2000		2.6	1.2
2000-2005		2.0	1.0
2005-2010		1.8	1.0

NOTES:
1. Source: San Luis Obispo County Planning & Building Department
2. Source: California State Department of Finance.
3. Projected growth rates for the county are projected on a yearly basis, rather than being an average rate. State growth rates are a numberical average, based upon Department of Finance projected total populations.

C. ECONOMY

Historically, the economy in San Luis Obispo County has been oriented toward agriculture, services (particularly government), and tourism. After 1940 a diversified economy resulted from substantial increases in the service and trade sectors, coupled with establishment and expansion of three large state institutions (California Polytechnic State University, Atascadero State Hospital and California Mens Colony). Using information from the California Department of Employment Development, Table C illustrates recent trends in the eight major employment sectors of the county economy, by identifying the percentage of total work force employed in each sector.

Table D reflects gradual but continuous expansion of employment in all sectors except government, agriculture, transportation and public utilities. Since the number of people employed in agriculture has been influenced greatly by increased improvements in farm management and mechanization, an increase in actual production quantity has occurred simultaneously with a decline in the number of employees. The extent of agricultural production and its importance is best represented by the amount of land in production and the market value of resulting products. In addition to the decline in agricultural employment, the percentage of the work force in the government sector of the economy has also declined.

The trade and services sectors have continued to increase in importance and this trend is expected to persist. The projected employment growth in the trade and services sectors reflects an expanding tourist economy and a growing local-serving retail trade.

TABLE D

DISTRIBUTION OF LABOR FORCE

Economic Sector	1970%	1974%	1978%	1987
Agriculture, Mining & Fisheries	10.4	8.2	4.5	3.0
Government	34.5	30.5	29.5	21.0
Trade (Retail & Wholesale)	22.9	23.8	25.7	29.5
Services	16.1	16.6	17.2	21.7
Construction	5.1	6.3	6.9	7.1
Transporation, Communication & Utilities	5.2	6.4	6.5	5.6
Manufacturing	4.2	5.4	6.2	7.1
Financial, Insurance & Real Estate	2.5	2.8	3.5	4.7
Total Work Force	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: State of California Employment Development Department

Labor Force Characteristics

The following statistics apply to the county overall and are intended as general indicators of county work force characteristics. More specific statistical information is available in appendices. The area plans relate local information to conclusions on area economies.

The unemployment rate in San Luis Obispo County has remained lower than the state rate. According to the 1980 census there was 6.4% unemployment in the county compared to 9.0% for the state. The unemployment rate in the county has steadily declined to 5.1% in 1986, with the state's rate at 6.7%.

Certain areas of the county have a large percentage of the labor force employed in agriculture. These areas experience a highly seasonal employment rate, with most employment in the summer months.

In 1988, the median income for a four-person household was $31,600 according to the State Department of Finance.

According to information provided by the State Employment Development Department, approximately 48% of the labor force in San Luis Obispo County is employed in low wage occupations compared to 44% in California overall. Of the low wage occupations, the services industry employs 17.3%, followed by administrative support 13.2%, and sales 10.4%.

The work force in the county is highly mobile and dependent on commuting. Nearly 50% of the workers are employed outside of their town of residence.

Land Use Decisions and the Economy

An important consideration in formulating Land Use Element policies is the need to anticipate land-related needs of the major economic sectors and providing for their continuing expansion. Planning and zoning decisions support the economy by reserving commercial and industrial areas for employment-generating activities. Long-range infrastructure needs can then be planned to serve such uses. Another way planning and zoning decisions affect the economy is their impact on the housing supply. They can directly affect employment in construction, and indirectly affect the availability of housing for new workers. Planning and zoning decisions also determine when and whether productive agricultural land is converted to other land uses.

The LUE area plans analyze the economic impacts of land use policies and consider the many variables that affect the amount of land needed for various economic activities. Areas and communities are evaluated in the area plan update process to ensure that sufficient developable land is available for continuing expansion of the economy during the term of the plan.

The update process also should consider achieving an appropriate balance between residential land, commercial/industrial development and agricultural land. A balance among types of development is desirable so that service and employment opportunities are available to the local population. This reduces the need for residents to travel long distances and provides an opportunity for communities to develop as unique and independent centers.

Economic activities are divided into four basic sectors: manufacturing; trade and services; government; agriculture; and new home construction. The relationship of each sector to the land use categories in the area plans is determined by the uses allowed in each category. Table E indicates which employment classifications are related

to specific land use categories in each sector. The economic sectors are discussed separately because each has different relationships with the use of land. This information provides a countywide economic perspective, while the area plans contain more localized economic information.

Manufacturing, Trade and Services

This sector encompasses the entire private, non-agricultural segment of the economy. Its importance is reflected in the previously cited statistics which indicate that this sector employed 73% of the 1986 labor force, up from 66% in 1978. For the Land Use Element to affect the economy positively, enough land must be made available in the five land use categories that permit the economic activities of this sector so that goods, services and jobs can be provided for the increasing population (see Chapter 6 for a description of the land use categories).

To determine the effects of LUE policies on land availability for business, area plan updates utilize land use survey studies to review the acreage of existing land uses and the ratio between developed commercial and industrial acreage to the existing population. This relationship is compared with the available acreage in the land use categories designated for future commercial/industrial uses and with population projection. The availability of services and facilities and community needs are also analyzed to establish a relationship between economic activities and land use.

Government

Government is the second largest economic sector in the county, providing 21.4% of the jobs, down from 29% in 1978. California Polytechnic State University, California Mens Colony and Atascadero State Hospital are primary employers. The government sector is least affected by land use decisions of the county. Decisions to expand or locate new state facilities are determined by the state government, with only minor input by local government.

Agriculture

Agriculture makes a substantial contribution to the county economy and accounts for approximately 80% of the privately-owned land in the county. The acreage of land used for agricultural production has remained fairly stable or has slightly declined between 1972 and 1986. Total agricultural production valuations from 1972 to 1986 have increased from approximately $62 million to $232 million. Total valuations are shown in Appendix B. It has become more crucial than in the past to encourage continuing agricultural production so the income provided by this sector can be maintained. The gross value of agricultural production is multiplied by a factor of two to three times through the local economy due to the involvement of other sectors of the economy, including industry, retail trade and commercial services. At the same time, agriculture is not as growth-inducing as other economic sectors and requires substantially fewer county services than other industries, thus agriculture contributes a net financial surplus to the county.

New Home Construction

New home construction is not being examined here as a portion of the work force but rather for its contribution to housing the expanding work force. Construction accounted for 7.3% of the work force in 1986, and in that respect it is addressed in the manufacturing, trade and services sectors. To ensure that enough housing is provided, the area plans compare the projected population with the buildout capacity. The buildout capacity is an estimate of the likely ultimate population that can be expected within the existing land use categories of the plan.

The land use patterns in the area plans provide sufficient developable land to accommodate a population greater than projected for the term of the plan. The Housing Element of the general plan also includes a policy to maintain an available supply of vacant single-family and multiple-family land, equal to at least 20% of a community's total supply.

TABLE E
ECONOMIC SECTORS AND LAND USE

Economic Sector	Land Use Categories	Employment Classification
Agriculture	Agriculture, Rural Lands & Open Space	Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry & Mining
Manufacturing, Trade & Services	Office & Professional Commercial Retail Commercial Service Industrial Recreation	Construction (Yards), Manufacturing, Transportation, Communications, Utilities, Trade (Retail & Wholesale) Services (Financial, Insurance & Real Estate
Government	Public Facilities	Local Government & Education State & Federal Government
New Home Construction	Primary: Residential Rural Residential Suburban Residential Single Family Residential Multi-Family Office & Professional Secondary: Agriculture Rural Lands Recreation	Construction (New Homes)

Economic Development

Land use policies have an important role in economic development and expanding employment opportunities. The area plans reflect the interrelationships between land uses, employment needs, housing demand and the provision of public services and facilities.

The county's policy to protect agricultural land is a top land use priority for guiding further economic development. Although agriculture does not provide a significant amount of employment, it is a stable sector of the county's economy.

The growth of tourism is expected to be a significant factor in stimulating the expansion of employment opportunities in the trades and services sector. The amenities that attract tourism to the county should be protected and enhanced. This includes protection of significant natural features and the scenic qualities in the county. It also presents an opportunity for communities to further develop their downtowns with public features, open spaces, and special events to expand visitor-based economies.

CHAPTER 3: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A. INTRODUCTION - HOW RESOURCES AND GROWTH ARE RELATED

Growing public awareness and more accurate information about the limits of natural resources and the accelerating costs of many public services have highlighted the need to better coordinate the rate of growth with the availability of both natural and man-made resources. Limitations affecting many man-made resources such as sewers, schools, police and fire protection can be overcome by upgrading or expanding such facilities. Although augmentation of man-made resources may be costly, the solutions are tangible and easily identified. This is often not the case with natural resource limitations. Solutions are not always obvious and technical data may be confusing or lacking altogether. There may also be significant, even prohibitive, costs involved in determining resource capacity and availability.

San Luis Obispo County is experiencing problems with both natural and man-made resources. In some communities, schools are overcrowded, or are anticipated to be. Communities have also experienced problems with septic systems and water supply. In addition, many roads are nearing unacceptable levels of service, and air quality in some areas is deteriorating.

The net result of such problems has been a never-ending game of "catch-up," where rates of growth and development outstrip the upgrading and renewal of community resources. Since most resources extend beyond political boundaries, cities, special districts and the county must work together to identify their resource capacities, and how those resources relate to future growth and development.

The Resource Management System (RMS) operates on two distinct levels. Attention is first given to the development of the county as a whole. The Land Use Element guides population growth where it can be supported by existing resources, using the RMS as an information tool. The countywide perspective must persist throughout the analysis of community resources and recommendations for resource management measures.

The second level of a Resource Management System is the community. Each community must be evaluated with respect to resource availability and capacity, as well as the effects of community development on surrounding agricultural lands and rural areas. When an individual community is perceived to have a potential resource problem, steps must be taken to correct the situation, and, if necessary, utilize various methods to redirect growth to communities which have the capability to support additional population.

The Land Use Element combines both perspectives described above in an effort to resolve issues of distribution and location rather than growth versus no-growth. However, temporary growth control measures must sometimes be considered at the community level.

Growth management beyond ordinary planning approaches may be necessary to restrict development where a limited resource cannot be expanded. Measures are described in the "Growth Management Techniques" section of this chapter which provide for more sustained, long-term growth than if unmanaged growth were to continue and exceed resource capacities at market-driven rates and locations.

The focus of the Resource Management System is on data collection, problem identification and solutions, which may include identification of growth management measures capable of providing lead time to develop and implement solutions to resource capacity problems. The operation of the RMS is the responsibility of the

Department of Planning and Building, working with a Resource Management Task Force composed of other county departments and public agencies (such as public water agencies and community service districts). The six resources addressed by the Resource Management System are:

1. Water
2. Sewage Disposal
3. Schools
4. Roads
5. Air Quality
6. Parks

(Amended 1990, Ord. 2443)

B. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

In the most general terms, the goal of the Resource Management System is to provide information in support of decisions about balancing land development and population growth with the resources required to support them. That goal can be expressed in the following objectives:

1. **Resource Conservation -** To minimize impacts of future development on the long-term availability of essential natural resources, and to identify the limits or "carrying capacities" of those resources by studying the relationship between development impacts and resource capacities.

2. **Public Health and Safety -** To support efforts to provide county communities with adequate potable water, air quality facilities for sewage disposal and safe streets and roads, by monitoring their capacities to accommodate development allowed by the Land Use Element.

3. **Public Services and Facilities -** To support the provision and upgrading of public services and facilities at a rate that keeps pace with population growth, by anticipating needs sufficiently in advance so that adequate facilities are available before their lack creates critical necessity.

4. **Agricultural Lands -** To encourage protection of productive agricultural land, by considering the effects of current and future development on areawide water resources needed for agriculture.

5. **Community Character -** To support the diversity of life-styles and physical character in county communities by tailoring local problem solutions to specific community conditions.

6. **Economic Impacts -** To delay or avoid the adverse economic effects of development moratoriums and more severe growth restrictions by enabling timely solutions to avoidable resource problems before the need for drastic remedial measures.

7. **Public Involvement -** To provide a public forum for reaching decisions affecting community growth and development, where goals and policies can be discussed, and where such decisions are subject to public scrutiny.

8. **Agency Cooperation -** To establish a system which supports coordination and cooperation between the various public, quasi-public and private entities providing services and facilities, including the county, the cities, community services districts, school districts, private utility companies, special districts, and the state and federal governments.

C. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FRAMEWORK

Conceptual Approach

The Land Use Element identifies appropriate locations for different land uses on the basis of minimizing conflicts between them. The Resource Management System refines that approach by also considering where the necessary resources exist or can be readily developed to support new land uses. Studies should also define the critical points in time when decisions are needed to maintain adequate lead times and avoid resource deficiencies.

The RMS estimates capacity levels for five essential resources: water supply, sewage disposal, schools, roads and air quality. While other resources are needed to support the human use of land, these five have the most direct relationship to physical development.

The Resource Management System was originally limited to urban areas because of the complexity of the issues and the limited availability of information. As the system has been implemented, it has become clear that a broader approach is necessary because substantial development is allowable in rural areas that will affect resources. Although the RMS continues to focus on urban areas, less populated rural areas are addressed as needed. This will enhance the effectiveness of the RMS, particularly with regard to water resources. Agriculture requires a great deal of water, and an analysis of water availability must take into account water used by agriculture in rural areas for agricultural uses including the production of food and fiber.

Levels of Severity for Monitored Resources

The Resource Management System uses three levels of alert (called levels of severity) to identify potential and progressively more immediate resource deficiencies. The alerts are intended to occur while sufficient time is available for avoiding or correcting a shortage before a crisis develops. The management framework is designed to deal with neighborhood-level problems, such as a needed collector street, communitywide problems, such as the need for public sewers, as well as an areawide problem such as an overdraft of a groundwater basin. Threshold population levels or dates corresponding to the three levels of severity have been defined in each area plan for the basic resources of each area and community. A summary of the current estimated levels of severity are listed in Appendix D.

Level of Severity III occurs when resource use exceeds the capacity of the resource. For instance, when a groundwater basin is overdrafted or a road segment is operating beyond its design capacity, those particular resources operate at Level III. Criteria for Levels I and II precede the threshold for Level III by providing lead times necessary for avoiding or correcting particular resource deficiencies. The criteria for each level are not absolute, as particular community conditions or circumstances may logically support alternative criteria. Instead, they offer general guidelines for determining when resource management measures should be enacted. The criteria are described in a later section of this chapter entitled "Resource Issues and Alert Criteria for Levels of Severity" and are summarized in Table F (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

When resource monitoring indicates a threshold population may have been reached for a level of severity, the Planning and Building Department notifies the Board of Supervisors with an advisory memo. Implementation of a public works project or management techniques would then occur only after public hearings on the validity of resource information being used, preparation of a resource capacity study, and action by the board, including the adoption of ordinances if necessary to address specific community resource problems.

D. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PROCEDURES

This section describes the activities that produce information to identify levels of severity, and the process for determining appropriate policy decisions in response to new information. The basic products of the information-gathering aspect of the RMS include:

Resource Inventories: Data collection through the update of the Land Use Element;

RMS Monitoring Program: Periodic status reports on resource usage within the levels of severity;

Annual Resource Summary Report: Annual report prepared by the Resource Management Task Force (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

Resource Capacity Studies: Special studies of resource usage when ordered by the Board of Supervisors upon its determination that a new level of severity has been reached through the advisory process described below.

Resource Inventories

As part of the update of the Land Use Element, the Planning and Building Department prepares an inventory of local water supplies, sewage disposal facilities, air quality, school and road capacities for each area plan. The inventories are developed jointly with the Public Works and Health Departments, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Air Pollution Control Board and other responsible agencies. The inventories should:

1. Identify existing resources, their location, estimated quantity and quality,

2. Describe known problem areas or deficiencies,

3. Estimate threshold populations that an existing resource can support,

4. Identify alternative or additional available resources, where known,

5. Estimate the lead time needed for correcting a previously identified deficiency,

6. Identify feasible capital projects or other programs that can realistically be funded or implemented within critical time periods.

While the area plan resource inventories are based upon the most current information, the data for some areas of the county are of limited precision. Consequently, the area plan inventories can be used for some areas to indicate where problems may exist, and how priorities should be set for needed resource capacity studies. The area plans indicate whether resource data mentioned are immediately usable for resource management purposes, or whether additional information is needed.

Any resource data used as the basis for general plan policies is periodically reviewed and updated as new information requires, through the LUE update program, capital improvement program review (that procedure is explained under "Implementation and Administration," page 7), and RMS monitoring programs.

Monitoring Program

The Department of Planning and Building collects data and monitors resource usage to update earlier resource inventories and identify progress needed to implement corrective measures. Status reports are prepared to inform the public and the Board of Supervisors of the situation within any level of severity. Each report should include the following:

1. A brief synopsis of the problem,
2. Any additional resource information,
3. Current and projected capacities,
4. An analysis of corrective actions, and
5. Recommendations for action.

Annual Resource Capacity Report

The Board of Supervisors established a Resource Management Task Force of staff members from various agencies to generate and evaluate resource data and develop recommendations on resource levels of severity and resulting actions (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

Phase 1 membership of the RMS Task Force includes:

- County Administration
- Planning and Building
- Environmental Health
- Environmental Coordinator
- Air Pollution Control District

(Amended 1990, Ord. 2443)

Phase 2 would add to the above group through memoranda of agreement:

- All incorporated cities
- Community Service Districts
- Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Coastal Commission
- Caltrans
- Parks & Recreation Commission

(Amended 1990, Ord. 2443)

The task force shall meet periodically to provide, review and evaluate resource capacity information. The scheduling of these deliberations should be coordinated with the budget process of the county and other agencies to ensure that any necessary actions can be taken in a timely fashion. The task force shall draft recommendations

on levels of severity and needed actions for periodic reports to the Board of Supervisors. Additionally, the task force shall develop an annual resource summary report for board action. The report shall include (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443):

- Revised resource data
- Evaluation of the data
- Recommendations for each community and planning area for levels of severity and resulting necessary actions
- Revisions to the resource deficiency criteria for level of severity (Table F in Framework For Planning)

(Amended 1990, Ord. 2443)

Resource Capacity Advisory Process

When the Planning and Building Department determines that the threshold of a level of severity has been reached as a consequence of the LUE update, the RMS monitoring program or the Annual Resource Summary Report, it sends an advisory memo to the Board of Supervisors to verify the situation and determine if a level of severity exists. An illustration of the advisory process is shown in Figure 3-1 (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

In each case, a board decision on whether Levels of Severity II or III exist can occur after a public hearing to review the data on which a level of severity finding is to be based. After the initial advisory memo, it may be necessary to continue to issue status reports to the Board, in order to keep them advised of the situation.

If an affected resource is not under county jurisdiction (e.g., a community service district may have responsibility over a local water supply problem), the Department of Planning and Building sends a copy of the advisory memo to the responsible agency advising that a potential problem may exist, based upon data available to the county, and to urge that the agency prepare a resource capacity study. Staff contacts and recommendations to the agency should occur in advance of the agency's budget preparation process so the necessary work can be included in their financial considerations.

The following sections describe in more detail the procedures for considering and reporting each of the three levels of severity:

Level I:	Resource capacity problem
Level II:	Diminishing resource capacity
Level III:	Resource capacity met or exceeded

Level I: Resource Capacity Problem

Level of Severity I is the earliest indication that a potential resource capacity problem exists or is anticipated. Its threshold is intended to be early enough to provide time to avoid a resource crisis with minimum impact on the development process. Level I occurs at the point where resource use will reach capacity in approximately the time required to expand capacity (including planning, funding and construction of a project where appropriate). Critical time periods for Level I problems for each resource are summarized in Table F (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

Under normal circumstances, community development is intended to continue through a Level I condition without any restrictions being enacted. Projects should still be evaluated without the Level I determination affecting them, unless otherwise directed by the Board of Supervisors.

Level I Procedure

When available data suggest a resource problem exists or is anticipated, the following procedure is to be used:

1. Staff forwards an advisory memorandum to the Board of Supervisors (with copies to the Planning Commission for their information). The memorandum identifies the capacity problem and enables the Board to review the data upon which the staff recommendation is based.

2. If the Board agrees that a potential resource problem exists, it initiates preparation of a resource capacity study, if necessary. The Board may also wish to initiate through an ordinance any conservation measures deemed necessary to partially relieve existing burdens on the affected resource (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

3. Preparation of a resource capacity study, if necessary, should be undertaken by the county department or outside agency providing the particular service or resource being considered, in cooperation with the county and any other affected agencies (such as public or private water companies, sewer districts, community service districts, school districts and incorporated cities). A resource capacity study should (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443):

   a. Determine the capacity of the resource being studied;

   b. Identify thresholds for Level II and III deficiencies;

   c. Identify alternate measures for avoiding a predicted resource deficiency and evaluate the feasibility (and possible funding methods) of each measure;

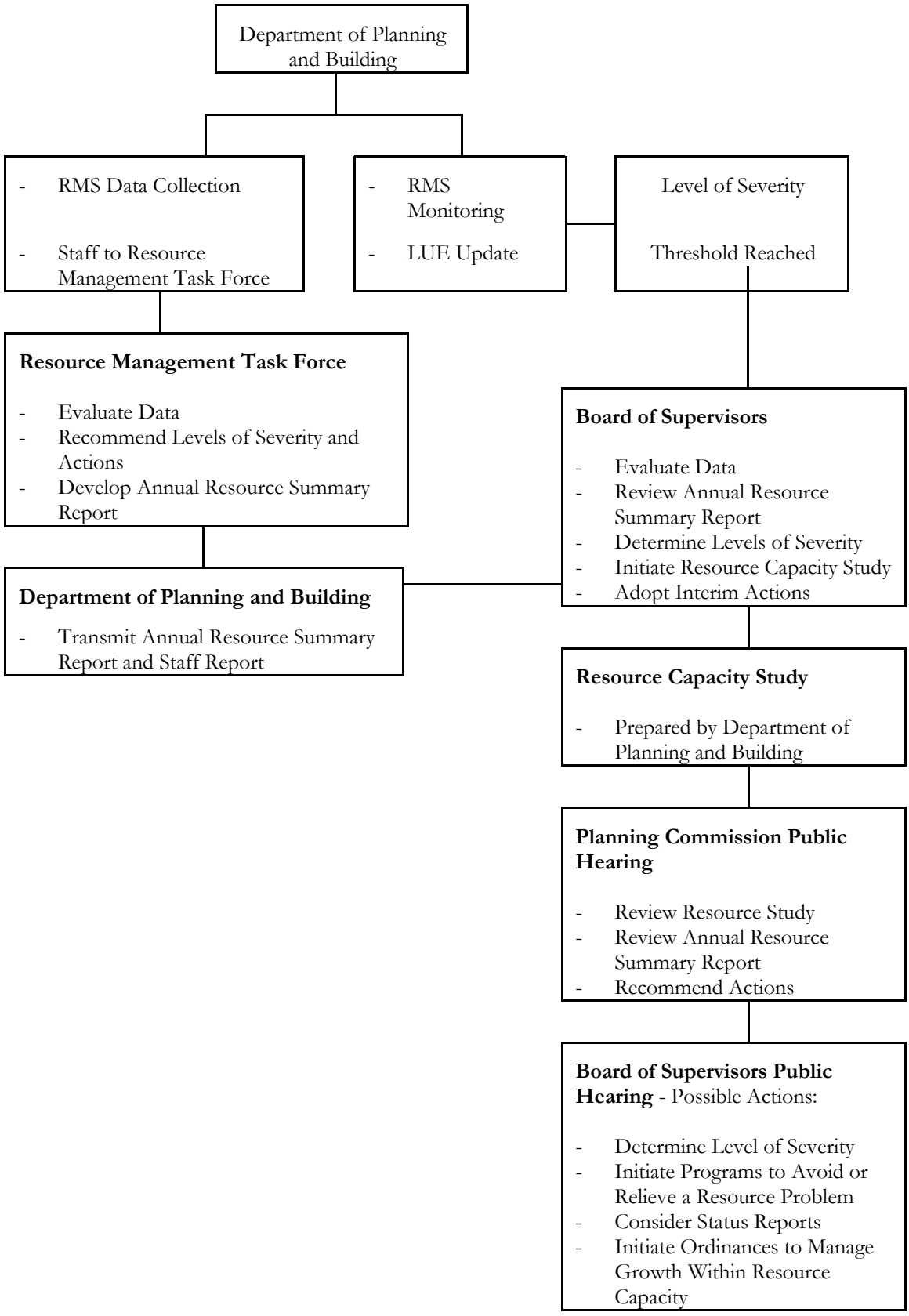
   d. Provide an estimated timetable for funding and completion of a public works project to correct the resource deficiency;

   e. Recommend techniques for growth management to be used if needed to extend capacities.

4. Upon completion, a resource capacity study is forwarded to the Planning Commission for public hearing. The commission reviews study data and recommends to the Board of Supervisors as to its adequacy. Commission review should be completed and reported to the Board of Supervisors within a maximum of 40 days from when the study is placed on the commission agenda.

5. Upon receipt of the Planning Commission recommendation, the Board of Supervisors holds a public hearing to review the resource capacity study, consider public testimony and determine whether the study should be certified. The board should certify that the study adequately assesses the affected resource as a basis for policy decisions. The data in the certified resource capacity study is then incorporated into the general plan as new resource data at the next available time for processing general plan amendments.

Table 3-1



Level I Action Requirements

When the board finds that a Level of Severity I exists, the following shall occur (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

1. Prior to the annual budget process, the Department of Planning and Building shall review the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) of the affected agency, city or county department for the necessary project to avoid worsening the level of severity and forward recommendations to the County Administrative Office (CAO) and the County Auditor (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

2. If sufficient progress is not made toward funding the necessary project within one year from the finding of a Level of Severity I, the CAO in coordination with the County Auditor shall recommend to the Board of Supervisors that they adopt an appropriate action from the following (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443):

a. Restrictions or conditions on budget allocations to an affected department, if applicable, that shift priorities to the project (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

b. Restrictions on funding, such as discretionary loans, to affected districts if applicable (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

c. Restriction on approvals of capital projects for the affected agency (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

d. In the case of special districts, recommend to LAFCo denial of any annexations that increase demand for the affected resource (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

e. A Level of Severity II, if the project cannot be constructed before resource capacity is exceeded (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

f. The board will impose conservation measures within the service area (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

g. Other actions as necessary (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

Level II: Diminishing Resource Capacity

A Level of Severity II occurs when the current rate of resource use will deplete the resource before its capacity can be increased. When this condition occurs, the rate of resource depletion must be decreased to avoid exceeding the resource capacity. This may be accomplished through conservation or other growth management techniques (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

If a funding decision cannot be made, for a variety of reasons, the Board of Supervisors may choose to implement development restrictions to increase the lead time for avoiding the deficiency. When the Board of Supervisors finds that a resource deficiency has been corrected, any ordinance that enacted development restrictions should be repealed or allowed to expire. Applications would then be processed and reviewed as normal.

Level II Procedure

At this level staff advises the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission when the capacity of a particular resource is diminishing past the point of merely being a potential problem. The basis for this recommendation may come from completion of a previously ordered resource capacity study, monitoring program, or information developed for the Land Use Element update.

1. The Department of Planning and Building forwards an advisory memo to the Board of Supervisors. Upon review of the Level II advisory memorandum, the board evaluates the validity of the data upon which the recommendation is based, and forwards the memo to the Planning Commission for a public hearing on the recommendation. The Board may also initiate a resource capacity study if more complete information is needed (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

2. If the advisory memo is sent to the Planning Commission for a public hearing, it recommends an appropriate course of action to the Board of Supervisors. Commission review must be completed and reported to the board within a maximum of 40 days from the time the matter is placed on the commission agenda.

3. Upon receipt of the Planning Commission recommendation, the Board of Supervisors holds a public hearing to consider relevant resource data, public testimony, and to determine whether Level II exists.

If the board determines that Level II does not exist, staff is directed to either continue monitoring the resource and report back to the board; terminate monitoring; or take other action the board finds appropriate.

Level II Action Requirements

When the board finds that a Level of Severity II exists, it shall adopt land use policies that respond to a delay in funding for a necessary project, including but not limited to, the following (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443):

1. Manage the rate of resource depletion within the affected community or area to extend the availability of the resource until such time as the project will provide additional resource capacity (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

2. Initiate appropriate financing mechanisms to recover the project cost including, but not limited to, capital improvement bonds, assessment districts, developer fees, etc. (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

3. Use RMS information to evaluate the appropriate scale and timing of discretionary projects within the remaining resource capacity to determine whether they should be approved (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

4. Enact restrictions on further land development in the area that is affected by the resource problem (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

5. Enact adjustments to land use categories so that they will accommodate no more than the population which can be served by the remaining available resource, or redirect growth to communities or areas that have available resource capacity (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

6. Impose stringent conservation measures within the service area (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

Level III: Unavoidable Resource Deficiency

This is the most critical level of concern. Level III occurs when the capacity (maximum safe yield) of a resource has been met or exceeded. At Level III, there is a deficiency of sufficient magnitude that drastic actions may be needed to protect public health and safety. While the intention of the RMS is to avoid reaching Level III entirely through a prior series of advisory memos, it is still possible that such a situation may occur (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

Level III Procedure

The procedure for a Level III alert is as follows:

1. An advisory memo is sent to the Board of Supervisors for consideration and referral to the Planning Commission as in the Level II procedure. The board should adopt appropriate interim actions to avoid panic or speculation on the outcome of the RMS procedure (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443).

2. The Planning Commission holds a public hearing on the advisory memo. As at Level II, the commission has a maximum of 40 days to hold the public hearing and report to the board.

3. After receiving the Planning Commission report, the board holds a public hearing to consider relevant resource data, public testimony, and to determine whether Level III exists.

If Level III is found not to exist, the board may direct staff to: maintain Level II procedures; modify Level II findings, or take whatever other action is deemed necessary by the board.

Level III Action Requirements

If Level III is found to exist, the board shall make formal findings to that effect, citing the basis for the findings, and shall (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443):

1. Institute appropriate measures (including capital programs) to correct the critical resource deficiency, or at least restore Level II so that severe restrictions will be unnecessary. In many cases, other agencies or districts will control decisions about necessary measures. The Board of Supervisors shall only seek cooperative assistance for a certain time period, beyond which measures may be considered to enact county ordinances or standards affecting resource usage such as development restrictions.

2. Adopt growth management or other urgency measures to initiate whatever restrictions are necessary to minimize or halt further resource depletion. Any such restrictions shall be reduced or removed only after a public hearing where the Board of Supervisors determines that Level III no longer exists and any dangers to public health or safety have been eliminated.

3. A moratorium on land development or other appropriate measures shall be enacted in the area that is affected by the resource problem until such time that the project provides additional resource capacity to support such development (Amended 1990, Ord. 2443; 1995, Ord. 2740).

Resource Management System Coordination

Resource inventories and resource capacity studies should clearly describe short and long-term capital improvement programs of affected agencies, to indicate feasible projects that can be funded realistically within critical time periods. The studies also should be coordinated with the urban service and urban reserve lines in the Land Use Element.

Resource capacity studies are to be forwarded to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) for its use when considering requests for expansion of spheres of influence and spheres of service, or when considering proposed annexations to any incorporated cities. Because LAFCO definitions of "sphere of service" and "sphere of influence" correspond to the LUE definitions of urban service line and urban reserve line, respectively, such coordination is necessary to support orderly urban expansion.

Coordination between service agencies and the LUE is actually mandated by the Government Code (Section 65401) requirement that agencies involved in evaluating, planning or constructing major public works annually provide the county with a list of their proposed projects. The county must then prepare "...a coordinated program of proposed public works for the ensuing fiscal year." The coordinated program is then submitted to the county Planning Commission for review and a report "...as to conformity with the adopted general plan or part thereof." Participation of relevant service agencies and companies in the Resource Management System is encouraged to coordinate solutions to resource problems, particularly through the capital improvement program process, also described in Chapter 8.

Resource Management Techniques

The central methods used by the Land Use Element and Land Use Ordinance in the management of new growth are the allocated distribution of land uses through zoning techniques, and development standards in the Land Use Ordinance which are intended to ensure compatibility between different types of land use. The capital improvement program also plays an important role in growth management because it determines the timing of new or expanded public facilities (such as roads, water supply and sewage disposal systems) which enable new development at the densities planned by the Land Use Element. There are also a variety of other growth management techniques which may be appropriately used by local governments where resource limitations affect the normal operation of the private land development process.

The Land Use Element is not intended to predetermine which techniques would be appropriate in a specific situation, since individual problem circumstances can vary widely. The choice of any implementing actions are chosen by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors based on a particular resource problem. Implementation of restrictions will occur after a public hearing and adoption of an ordinance to enact specific measures in a defined area. Techniques for correcting local problems are evaluated in the area plan resource inventories, advisory memos and resource capacity studies prepared at Levels I, II and III. The Land Use Element and Land Use Ordinance is the management structure implementing policy decisions as a part of the RMS advisory process.

Some representative examples of methods that could be used to conserve resources and effectively intervene in different situations are summarized in the following list:

1. Density limitations to limit the number of people that could potentially reside in an area.

2. Building intensity or use limitations that would limit the potential scale and intensity of nonresidential development.

3. Target ceiling for the maximum population that could reside within resource capacities, with a limit on the corresponding number of building permits.

4. Controls on the rate of new development and subdivisions to provide more lead time for resource management decisions and for funding to be programmed where it is feasible, by limiting the annual number of permits, or to sustain growth longer under a population ceiling.

5. Phasing policies on the extension of services such as sewage disposal, and on recommended annexations.

6. Locating public improvements to influence the location and direction of growth where resources are identified to be more adequate.

7. Scheduling public capital expenditures to influence growth into more desirable areas with resource availability.

8. Acquisition or transfer of development rights to relocate previously allowable development into other areas with more adequate resources.

9. Development impact fees to provide funding for necessary public facilities that will minimize the impacts of growth.

If a growth management limitation is considered as an amendment of the county's general plan or its enacting ordinances (Land Use Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance), the Government Code requires specific findings concerning the efforts the county is making to implement its Housing Element and the public health, safety and welfare considerations that justify reducing the housing opportunities of the region (Government Code Section 65302.8). The State's zoning and subdivision laws include provisions that cities and counties implementing these State laws through enacting ordinances and other actions must consider their effects upon the housing needs of the region (Government Code Sections 65863.6, 65913.2, and 66412.2). The laws further require cities and counties to balance the housing needs of the region against the needs of their residents for public services and the available fiscal and environmental resources (Government Code Sections 65863.6 and 66412.2).

E. RESOURCE ISSUES AND CRITERIA FOR LEVELS OF SEVERITY

As resources are studied to identify their capacities and rates of use, several countywide resource policy issues become apparent. Their importance demands careful scrutiny and evaluation of alternatives. While the Resource Management System has been designed to support improvement of local situations, long-term solutions may not be possible unless broader issues are also resolved.

Those issues are presented here only to indicate some of the major resource questions that will be facing the county in the near future. More specific resource capacity information is included in the area plans. This chapter, including the following descriptions of those issues, shall not be considered in evaluating individual development proposals or questions of land division consistency.

Each type of resource has unique characteristics that require a different approach to establishing levels of severity for it. This section describes the regional policy issues for resources and the criteria to be used to identify when each level of severity is reached. Table F provides a brief summary of the criteria. Each resource topic also includes recommended subjects for resource capacity studies that will be prepared through the RMS advisory process.

WATER SUPPLY

Policy Issues

Water resources have long been a widespread concern in the county. Major concerns associated with water resources include issues of distribution as well as issues of new supply development. The problem in this county is that potable, plentiful water sources often are not conveniently located for ready distribution to existing urban areas. If the county is to grow beyond the present level, supplemental water resources (including new facilities for distribution of existing remote sources) will be needed.

The most basic policy issue regarding county water resources is how existing supplies should be developed and distributed. The distribution issue regards whether the apparent overdrafting of groundwater in some basins should continue, or whether consumption should be limited to levels within each basin's dependable supply. Goals are stated in Chapter 1 that support balancing the Land Use Element's capacity for growth with the long-term availability of resources. Some groundwater basins are large enough to provide a supply for many years, yet early corrective actions will avoid the effects of a reduced supply that will otherwise become apparent. Overdrafting (or mining) of a groundwater basin can be corrected once it starts through management of water use, but it is complicated and difficult to do so. Besides water conservation, management of the location, density and rate of development can minimize the increased use of the basin and provide lead time for developing supplemental sources. Imported water supplies can be provided to replace overdrafting that would otherwise occur, instead of adding more water to use with increased overdrafting. Besides the cumulative extent of overdrafting caused by the policies of the Land Use Element, the timing and role of supplemental water supplies will affect how serious a problem overdrafting of groundwater could become. The major water distribution questions are:

1. Whether limited supplies should be consciously divided between urban use and agricultural use; and

2. Whether water should be transported from one basin to serve another.

The question of agricultural and urban water use is likely to become more important over time because urban and agricultural users most often draw from a single groundwater source, and agriculture generally requires significantly more water than urban use. Where formal groundwater management may need to be considered in some areas of the county, agriculture's essential use of this natural resource should have priority. Where a change in the distribution of water does not adequately provide for agricultural production, it may be appropriate to consider a change of the land use category to allow non-agricultural uses.

The Public Works Department has estimated that capacities and locations of presently developed water supplies serve a population of approximately 150,000. However, the county population was estimated to be 198,220 in 1987. The dependable supply is about 138,000 acre-feet per year, and demand exceeds this supply by 70,000 acre-fee per year. This demand is currently being met by overdrafting some of the groundwater basins. Although this may be an acceptable short-term solution, continued overdrafting of the groundwater basins can lead to serious consequences in the future.

In March, 1986, the county completed an update of the Master Water Plan. This plan examines alternative supplemental water sources including:

1. The state water project
2. Utilization of water from Lake Nacimiento
3. Construction of dams on local creeks
4. Desalinization/demineralization
5. Reclamation of wastewater
6. Water conservation

The Master Water Plan identifies the state water project as the least costly alternative. Its maximum entitlement is 25,000 acre-feet per year, and some portion would recharge ground-water basins as wastewater. Even with the development of the state water project, overdrafting of the basins will continue to occur given the current deficit in the water supply. The Master Water Plan proposes a series of other supplemental water supply projects to reduce this deficit. However, commitments are needed from water providers that they would stop or reduce groundwater withdrawals once they obtain supplemental supplies in order to make a meaningful reduction in overdrafting. Otherwise, supplemental water supplies would not replace groundwater extraction, but would serve more development and not significantly improve the existing deficit situation.

Water Supply Criteria

Water Resources
A Level of Severity III exists when water demand equals the available resource; the amount of consumption has reached the dependable supply of the resource. A Level III may also exist if the time required to correct the problem is longer than the time available before the dependable supply is reached.

Level II for a water resource occurs when water demand projected over seven years (or other lead time determined by a resource capacity study) equals or exceeds the estimated dependable supply. Seven years is the estimated minimum time required to develop a major supplementary water resource to the point of delivery to users.

Level I is reached for a water resource when increasing water demand projected over nine years equals or exceeds the estimated dependable supply. Level I provides two years for preparation of resource capacity studies and evaluation of alternative courses of action.

Resource Capacity Study: A resource capacity study should: 1) Inventory existing water resources available to the agency operating the system; 2) document existing demand for water by all area user-groups; and 3) explore any conservation measures that could reasonably be imposed by the water agency.

Water Systems
Level III exists for a water supply system when water demand equals available capacity; in this case when a water distribution system is functioning at design capacity, or will be functioning at capacity before improvements can be made. The capacity of a water system is the design capacity of its component parts: storage, pipelines, pumping stations and treatment plants.

Level II for a water system occurs at the beginning of the five year lead time (or other lead time determined by a resource capacity study) needed to design, fund and construct system improvements necessary to avoid a Level III problem.

Level I occurs when the system is projected to be operating at design capacity within seven years of the projection. Two years would then be available for preparation of resource capacity studies and evaluation of alternatives.

TABLE F

RESOURCE DEFICIENCY CRITERIA FOR LEVELS OF SEVERITY

RESOURCE	LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
1. WATER SUPPLY			
a. Water Resource	Projected consumption estimated to exceed dependable supply within 9 years	7 year lead time to develop supplementary water for delivery to users	Resource is being used at or beyond its estimated dependable supply or will deplete dependable supply before new supplies can be developed
b. Water System	System projected to be operating at design capacity within 7 years	5 year lead time to complete major improvements	System operating at or beyond design capacity or will be at capacity before improvements are constructed
2. SEWAGE DISPOSAL			
a. Treatment Plant	Projected average daily flow = plant capacity within 6 years	5 year projected average daily flow = plant capacity	Average daily flow = plant capacity or the plant will be at capacity before improvements can be made
b. Sewage Collection Lines and Lift Stations	Projected flow will equal 90% of system capacity within 2 years	System at 90% capacity; or 5 year projected flow equals capacity; or LUE build-out capacity effluent would exceed system capacity	System operating at 100% capacity or will be at capacity before improvements can be made
c. Individual Septic Tank Systems	System failures reach 5% by area; RWQCB, Health or Engineering Departments to identify potential health problem	System failure rate reaches 15% by area or community	System failures at 25%; threat to public health and safety exists. 5 years needed to build public sewer system
3. SCHOOLS	7 year projected enrollment will be at or above maximum students/classroom ratio established by school district	5 year projected enrollment will be at or above maximum students/classroom ratio	Enrollment at or above maximum students/classroom ratio
4. ROADS/CIRCULATION	Projected traffic volume will reach Level of Service (LOS) D within 5 years	Route will be operating at LOS-D in 2 years or less	Route is operating at LOS-D (As defined in the 1985 Highway Capacity Manual)
5. AIR QUALITY	Infrequent violations of the federal ozone standard, or emissions reach 75% of the standard, or offsets are reduced to less than 50% of baseline levels	Periodic violations of the federal and state ozone standard, or emissions reach 90% of the designated threshold, or offsets are reduced to 25% of baseline levels	Federal ozone standard is exceeded one or more days within three consecutive years, or emissions regularly exceed the standard, or offsets have been depleted

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SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Policy Issues

Issues relating to sewage disposal usually affect a specific community, though there may be countywide implications. Methods of sewage disposal can be closely related to groundwater basin conditions. Installation of public sewers could adversely impact a groundwater basin if the system eliminated recharge to the basin previously provided through the use of septic tanks. Conversely, a decision not to install sewers in a specific area could cause degradation of groundwater from septic tank effluent to a point that public health protection would require supplemental water. Related issues associated with wastewater disposal include:

1. Ocean outfall versus land disposal
2. Compatibility of land disposal with neighboring land uses
3. Groundwater basin recharge
4. Minimum lot size requirement
5. Lot merger procedures
6. Subsurface soil conditions

A second group of concerns relating to sewage disposal involves growth inducement. It is important to consider that growth potential can be created if sewers are installed where none formerly existed. Decisions to install major sewer truck lines or treatment facilities can have substantial impacts on lands traversed by new lines or in proximity to a treatment plant. The growth-inducing effects of such facility improvements must be considered in ongoing planning efforts to enable conscious land use policy decisions about the potential long-range effects of facility improvements.

Since the county does not always have authority over sewer installation, it is important for the county to closely review sewer project proposals by other agencies. Review and coordination enables the county to anticipate and accommodate or mitigate the effects of such projects. Such review is possible through the annual capital improvement program review (discussed in Chapter 8, "Implementation & Administration"), as well as the environmental review.

Sewage Disposal Criteria

Treatment Plant

Level of Severity III occurs when peak daily flow equals or exceeds the capacity of a sewage system for both treatment and disposal facilities. Sewer systems must be designed to handle variations in effluent volume from average daily flows. To estimate the capacity of a facility, the average daily flow is increased by a "peaking factor" that allows for higher short-term flow rates. Based upon standard engineering practices, the peaking factor becomes smaller as average daily flow increases.

Level II exists when the five-year projected peak daily flow (or other time period identified by a resource capacity study) equals plant capacity. Five years is estimated as the minimum time needed to design, fund and construct additional capacity for treatment and disposal facilities.

Level I exists when the six-year projected peak daily flow equals plant capacity. Level I provides one year to prepare resource capacity studies and evaluate alternative courses of action.

Resource Capacity Study: Inventory annual flows into the sewage treatment plan; identify any additional capacity that may be available for new connections without creating water quality problems; determine potential effects of water consumption reductions on long-term plant capacity; estimate timing of plant expansion.

Sewage Collection System

Level III is reached when peak flows fill any component of a collection system to 100% capacity. A sewage collection system includes facilities that collect and deliver sewage to a treatment plant for processing and disposal (sewer pipelines, lift station, etc.).

Level II exists when a system is operating at 75% capacity; when the five-year projected peak flow (or other flow/time period) equals system capacity; or when the inventory of developable land in a community would, if developed, generate enough sewage to exceed system capacity.

A Level I concern exists when two year projected flows equal 75% of the system capacity. Two years is the time needed to prepare a resource capacity study.

Septic Tank Systems

Level III exists when failures reach 25% of the area's septic systems, and the county Health Department and RWQCB find that public health is endangered. At that point, if documentation required by state law suggests a moratorium on further use or expansion of individual disposal systems is required, the necessary five-year period is begun for evaluation of alternatives to septic systems, and for the design, funding and construction of public sewage facilities if that is the alternative selected. Other alternatives could be to initiate a community septic system maintenance program, or install a collection and disposal system to existing on-site treatment tanks.

Level II exists when failures reach 15% when monitoring indicates that conditions will reach or exceed acceptable levels for public health within five years (the time needed to design, fund and construct a public sewer system), based upon current growth rates or programs should be developed to monitor and correct the problem.

Level I for a septic tank area exists when failures occur in 5% of systems in an area, or other number sufficient for the Health Department to identify a potential public health problem.

Resource Capacity Study: Inventory the extent of existing septic tank leaching field failures and impacts on surface and groundwater; locations where additional septic tanks may be approved (if any) and standards for such approval; and need for alternative methods of sewage disposal, including community or package sewer treatment systems.

In areas with septic systems, identifying specific severity levels becomes more difficult. The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has primary responsibility for protecting groundwater resources and surface water bodies from wastewater pollution. The control board's "Water Quality Control Plan" notes that septic systems are sometimes seen as an interim sewage disposal in urbanizing areas, but must often function for years before a community sewer system becomes available. The county Health Department works closely with the RWQCB in determining where potential septic problem areas may exist. The Health Department and RWQCB use the following criteria to identify septic system failures:

1. Evidence of sewage, or waters of sewage origin on the ground surface;

2. Plumbing fixtures that drain improperly because of a problem in individual subsurface disposal systems;

3. Frequent pumping of subsurface sewage systems for reasons other than normally scheduled maintenance;

4. Persistent odors traceable to any individual subsurface sewage system(s);

5. Pollution of wells or underlying groundwaters;

6. Restricted use of plumbing fixtures to prevent occurrence of criteria one through five above.

* Includes septic tank systems or small aerobic systems with subsurface disposal. Typical disposal systems include leach fields, seepage pits, or evapotranspiration mounds.

Because of the difficulty of identifying causes for system failures, an area pattern must become apparent before a threat to public health is assumed. The RWQCB has suggested that reasonable failure thresholds for defining the alert levels would occur in 10% increments, beginning at 5% of the systems in a given area.

In areas where soil percolation characteristics particularly favor the use of septic disposal fields, other problems can arise, including degradation of groundwater by nitrate buildup. That condition is of particular concern where septic systems are used over a groundwater basin serving as a community water supply. In rapidly developing areas where adequate data are unavailable, the RWQCB Basin Plan recommends that monitoring of surface and groundwaters be initiated to determine whether such problems are developing. Such a program would constitute a Level I resource capacity study.

ROADS/CIRCULATION

Policy Issues

The major resource policy question involving roads is whether new major roads should continue to be developed on a piecemeal basis or whether the county should assume the principal role in providing new roads. Previous policy has required developers to provide roads (or partial roads) with new projects. That approach can sometimes result in confusing, interrupted road systems with varying levels of improvement that cannot meet the needs of developing areas. Alternatives to a piecemeal approach might include the following financing methods:

1. County or property owner-initiated assessment districts

2. Development fees

3. Countywide sales tax increase

4. Countywide motor vehicle fuel tax

5. Redevelopment agency

6. State or federal matching funds

The San Luis Obispo Area Coordinating Council is assisting in the effort to coordinate planning between the county and Caltrans. Caltrans must compete statewide for funds. Thus many projects proposed in the county General Plan are low on Caltrans priority lists. It may be that more aggressive county participation in state planning efforts is desirable to enable working toward greater coordination of state projects with county policies and priorities.

Roads/Circulation Criteria

Level of Severity III occurs when a road is operating at Level of Service (LOS) "D". Level II occurs when a road is projected to be operating at LOS D within two years. Level I exists when traffic volume projections indicate that Level of Service "D" would be reached within five years.

Resource Capacity Study: When Level I occurs, the Public Works Department should evaluate roadway capacity against the area plan's allowance for development and any proposed and recently approved major projects; identify alternative improvements and their costs at different allowable densities and uses, in cooperation with the Planning and Building Department; and recommend feasible improvements and/or revisions to the area plan.

The Public Works Department is in the process of preparing a circulation study for each planning area. The studies will be updated regularly to reflect changes in circulation and thus may be used as resource capacity studies. If a circulation study has not yet been completed for an area, the Planning and Building Department may recommend to the Public Works Department that it be placed on higher priority.

Identifying the traffic capacity of roads requires use of several traffic engineering standards. Roads are evaluated for their "level of service" characteristics to assess the ability of a given road segment to satisfy projected travel demand. The Highway Capacity Manual establishes service levels A through E based on such factors as safety, freedom to maneuver, travel time and driver comfort. Table G shows the level of service for various road types. When a road has reached "capacity", it is considered to be at a Level of Service E. That volume represents the maximum number of vehicles per hour the road can safely accommodate.

The Planning and Public Works Departments operate a monitoring and reporting system in order to anticipate potential problems. The levels of service are calculated for selected roads in the county on a quarterly and annual basis. This information is supplied to the Planning and Building Department in order to determine the level of severity.

SCHOOLS

Policy Issues

Some school districts with substantial growth in recent years have experienced overcrowding. County policies on future development in these school districts are important because new development which occurs faster than school facilities develop can aggravate existing overcrowding or create overcrowding where it had not been previously experienced. Recent legislation provides money for new school construction; however, school districts are required to match that funding. In order to accomplish this, the legislation permits the school district to collect fees from developers. The district may levy fees of no more than $1.50 per square foot for residences and .50 cents per square foot for commercial projects. The fees collected are matched with state funds. This legislation will enable the school district to construct much needed permanent facilities.

Schools Criteria

Level III exists for schools when enrollment equals or exceeds the maximum student/classroom ratio.

A Level II problem exists when enrollment projections indicate that school capacity will be reached within five years or other shorter time increment identified by a resource capacity study. It is estimated that five years are needed to plan, finance and construct new school facilities, though that lead time could be extended by using mobile classrooms.

A Level I concern would exist when enrollment projections reach school capacity in seven years. Seven years is the maximum period over which school districts can project enrollment with reasonable accuracy. The two years between Levels I & II should be used to prepare a resource capacity study.

Resource Capacity Study: Inventory the number of classrooms available, estimate average daily attendance, project future school populations. In addition, identify facilities needed, possible locations, funding source.

The capacity of a school is the maximum number of students that can be accommodated without exceeding school district standards for the maximum number of students per classroom. Those standards are based upon educational quality and efficient use levels for facilities and personnel.

When determining school capacity, adopted school district standards should be accepted by the county. Most school districts prepare their own population estimates for making enrollment projections. If available, district population projections should be used to determine threshold levels, in conjunction with population projections the Planning and Building Department has prepared.

AIR QUALITY

Policy Issues

The air quality of the county is not as tangible or easily understood as some of our other resources. Nonetheless, clean air is a valuable and essential natural resource which affects many aspects of our daily lives. It is vital to our health and welfare, to the local agricultural economy, and to the aesthetic beauty and quality of life, enjoyed by county residents. The capacity of the air to absorb environmental contaminants is limited, however, and must be managed wisely to avoid significant deterioration of the resource.

The County of San Luis Obispo has the authority under the police power to protect the health, safety, and welfare of citizens from such environmental hazards as air pollution. The general plan and development regulatory system could be amended where necessary to respond to air quality concerns that may be raised by the Resource Management System procedures. For example, general plan amendments may be necessary to restrict the location and types of uses as a result of air quality analyses reported through the RMS.

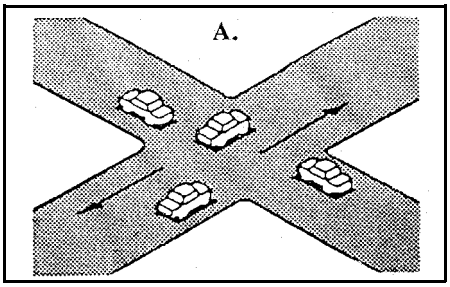
The County and Air Pollution Control District (APCD) have the responsibility of protecting and managing air quality within the county. A primary component of that responsibility involves regulatory and planning efforts to assure that air quality within the county meets the requirements of state and national air quality standards.

State law delegates regulatory authority to the APCD over all non-vehicular sources of air pollution within the district. New and modified stationary sources must comply with the district's new source review rule. This generally requires stringent emission controls and a demonstration that project emissions will not cause a violation, or interfere with the attainment and maintenance, of any California or national ambient air quality standard. The primary pollutants regulated by these standards are ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter. With the exception of ozone, ambient concentrations of these pollutants are primarily influenced by nearby sources of emissions. High concentrations of sulfur dioxide, for example, can usually be traced back to a specific source, where regulatory measures or other actions can be implemented to correct an identified problem. Ozone, on the other hand, tends to be regional in nature and is therefore more difficult to control.

TABLE G
STREETS AND HIGHWAYS LEVELS OF SERVICE CONCEPT

Level of Service A

1. Free flow conditions
2. Individual users are virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream

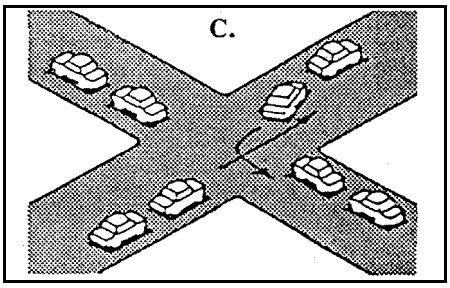


Level of Service B

1. Stable traffic flow
2. Freedom to select desired speeds is relatively unaffected, but there is a slight decline in the freedom to maneuver

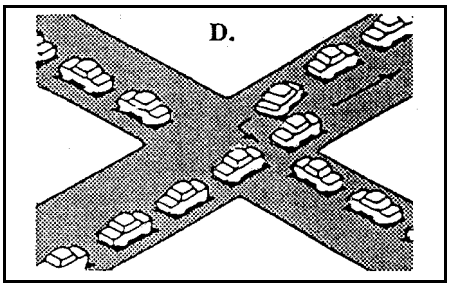
Level of Service C

1. Stable and acceptable flow but speed and maneuverability somewhat restricted due to higher volumes
2. Operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by the presence of others



Level of Service D

1. High density but stable flow
2. Driver experiences a generally poor level of comfort and convenience
3. Small increases in traffic flow will cause operational problems
4. Maneuverability restricted

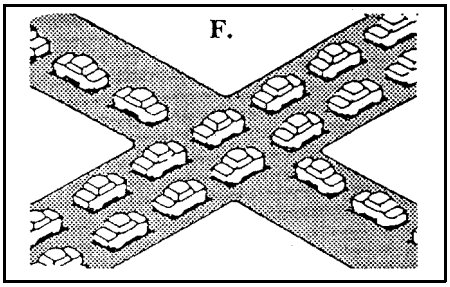


Level of Service E

1. Speeds reduced to low, but relatively uniform value
2. Freedom to maneuver is extremely difficult, frustration is high
3. Volume at or near capacity
4. Unstable flow

Level of Service F

1. Forced or breakdown flow conditions
2. Stoppage for long periods due to congestion
3. Volumes drop to zero in extreme cases



Ozone is the pollutant of greatest concern in the county and is the primary focus of this plan. Ozone is not emitted directly to the air, but is formed by an atmospheric chemical reaction between reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) in the presence of sunlight. These compounds are generally emitted through the combustion of fossil fuels. Motor vehicles represent the largest category of combustion sources and generate over 50% of the ROG and NOx emissions in the county. Land use decisions which result in increased vehicle use will contribute to regional ozone formation. Thus, a number of critical determinants of air quality are related to such issues as population distribution and employment growth. These patterns are largely conditioned by decisions of city and county governments and by developers. Careful and informed planning is essential to the decision-making process to ensure that the air quality resource is adequately protected.

Air quality planning and management strategies are normally developed and executed through the Air Quality Attainment and Maintenance Plan for San Luis Obispo County (AQAMP). The existing AQAMP was prepared and adopted by the San Luis Obispo County Council of Governments in 1979. This plan, which is currently in the initial stages of a comprehensive update, is designed to track the existing and future air quality of the county and to provide a comprehensive strategy to protect this resource from significant deterioration. Integral to the AQAMP is the identification of a series of emission control measures, and a schedule for their implementation, which will help to mitigate the impacts of industrial and population growth. Thus, the AQAMP defines a detailed management process for air pollution control within the county. Air quality monitoring and other tracking methods will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the AQAMP. Resource Management System thresholds will be triggered if an air quality problem develops which cannot be corrected through normal implementation of approved control strategies in the AQAMP.

In order to facilitate the monitoring and tracking process, each area plan contains an air resource inventory. The inventories have the following components:

1. An emissions inventory for every planning area, updated annually or biannually.

2. A description of pollutants most likely to limit growth.

3. A description of existing ambient air quality in planning areas.

4. Identification through the AQAMP of emission reduction measures, control strategies, or other potential alternatives for extending the life of the resource.

Air Quality Criteria

The capacity of the air resource in a given area is the quantity of pollutant emissions that can be sustained without violating ambient air quality standards. Three different indicators can be used to track the status of the resource: ambient air monitoring data, emissions inventory information and the remaining emission control measures available to reduce emissions within the air quality planning area.

A Level III problem exists when one of the following findings is made:

1. Ambient air monitoring at any county monitoring station shows a violation(s) of the federal 0_3 standard on one or more days/year for three consecutive years, or such violations are projected to occur; or

2. Emissions in the planning area equal or exceed a pollutant threshold limit determined by regional 0_3 modeling; and

3. All ozone control measures approved through the AQAMP have already been implemented in the planning area.

Level III is the most critical level of concern and would require timely development and implementation of control strategies to protect the public health and welfare and bring the air quality resource into compliance with the applicable air quality standards. Permitting of new emission sources within the county may require the adoption of special regulatory restrictions beyond those previously implemented.

Level II for the air quality resource occurs when one of the following is measured:

1. Air monitoring shows one or more violations per year of the state 0_3 standard and the county, or a portion of it, has been designated by the state as non-attainment for ozone; or

2. Emissions in the planning area reach 90% of the designated threshold; and are projected to reach 100% within the next three years; and

3. At least 75% of the available emission reductions in the planning area have been utilized through implementation of emission control measures approved through the AQAMP.

Level II would require the preparation of a resource capacity study in conjunction with a re-analysis and adjustment of the implementation schedule for the emission control strategies identified and approved in the AQAMP. Three years is the estimated minimum time required to prepare the study and begin implementation of the most effective control measures to mitigate the problem.

Level I for the air quality resource occurs when:

1. Air monitoring shows periodic but infrequent violations of the state 0_3 standard, with no area of the county designated by the state as a non-attainment area; and

2. Emissions in the planning area approach 75% of the designated threshold level, and are projected to reach 100% within the next five years even with implementation of all AQAMP strategies; and

3. At least 50% of the available emission reductions in the planning area have been utilized through implementation of emission control measures approved through the AQAMP.

Level I would require modification and updating of the air quality attainment and maintenance plan to develop additional planning and emission control strategies designed to prevent increased violations of the state 0_3 standard. Five years is the estimated minimum time required to update the plan, begin the implementation of control strategies and monitor the results.

CHAPTER 4: PUBLIC SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

A major function of local government is to provide public services within its jurisdiction. However, it has become increasingly difficult to time improvements in pace with development and to deliver adequate services at an affordable price.

This chapter describes how the Land Use Element identifies areas for different levels of public services, and how expansion of services is coordinated between public agencies.

B. MAJOR ISSUES

1. While new development provides some financial support for the increased service demands it creates, the cost to government of providing needed services frequently exceeds the return.

2. Development often occurs before the up-front costs to improve facilities and services are available, thus overburdening existing facilities.

3. The economics of land use often result in development occurring first in urban fringe areas where land cost is less, instead of adjacent to existing development. Such development results in higher costs for extension of services and can also lead to inappropriately timed land use conversions.

4. Public and private service agencies and purveyors may not actively coordinate their provision of services with planned growth areas.

C. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals identify public desires to address planning issues and provide a reference point to determine how they should be resolved. The following goals are also listed in Chapter 1 along with other land-use and service-related goals.

Objectives identify types of actions that relate to the major issues as well as implementing the general goals. More area-specific objectives and policies are provided in the area plans.

Goal:

1. Provide additional public resources, services and facilities in sufficient time to avoid overburdening existing resources, services and facilities.

Objective:
Schedule development to occur when needed services are available or can be supplied concurrently. This could include applying the use of "holding zones" where development could initially be limited below the maximum density permitted, until service improvements are available.

Goal:

2. Maintain a distinction between urban and rural development by providing for rural uses outside of urban and village areas which are predominantly agriculture, low-intensity recreation, residential and open space uses which will preserve and enhance the pattern of identifiable communities.

Objectives:
Direct the extension of urban services to areas within urban and village reserve lines, and restrict urban services from being provided outside urban or village areas.

Fund improvements that would primarily benefit the residents or users of new development, and that are necessary to maintain an adequate level of public services, through impact fees.

D. URBAN RESERVE LINES

A basic problem in providing services is defining appropriate boundaries between urban and non-urban areas, and proper levels of service for each. The Land Use Element establishes such boundaries through the urban reserve line, urban service line, and village reserve line.

The Urban Reserve Line (URL) is a boundary separating urban/suburban land uses and rural land uses. It is based upon both the needs of individual communities for areas of additional growth during the term of the LUE, which is a 20 year period. It relates to the capacities of community resources to support such growth. The urban reserve line defines growth areas around urban centers in which the county, or the county and affected city, will actively coordinate plans, policies and standards relating to building construction, subdivision development, land use and zoning regulations, street and highway construction, public utility systems, and other matters related to the orderly development of urban areas.

The amount of land included in each community URL by the Land Use Element is based on the following factors:

1. Community population projections.

2. The land absorption rate (how much land is actually being converted to urban uses each year).

3. Existing and planned capability of local services such as water and sewer systems committed in actual capital improvement programs to support continuing local development.

4. Community preferences about the character of growth.

The land use policies in the LUE area plans give particular attention to identifying suitable areas within the urban reserve line for the full range of urban and suburban land uses, where such uses can be readily supported by services. Urban reserve lines are reviewed in the five-year plan update cycle to determine the continuing validity and need for change of those boundaries.

Any changes in an urban reserve line require an amendment to the Land Use Element. When the amendment is located within the coastal zone, the amendment must be approved by the Coastal Commission.

Urban Reserve Lines are established by the Land Use Element for the following cities and unincorporated communities:

Arroyo Grande	Cayucos	Oceano	San Miguel	Templeton
Atascadero	Grover City	Paso Robles	Santa Martgarita	
Avila Beach	Morro Bay	Pismo Beach	Shandon	
Cambria	Nipomo	San Luis Obispo	South Bay	

E. URBAN SERVICE LINES

Within the urban reserve line of each community is the urban services line (USL). The USL encompasses areas where urban services are now provided or where such services are expected to be extended during the next five to 10 years, as the community expands toward the full development potential represented by the urban reserve line. Placement of the USL is based upon existing and planned (committed in capital improvement programs) service system capacities and upon community plans.

The urban services line allows for orderly phasing of community expansion within an urban reserve line, as illustrated in Figure 4-1. The USL is reviewed every 5 years in the LUE update process, along with the growth projections and service capabilities on which it is based. That review updates conditions within the community, correlating community growth with available resources. Review of the USL thereby allows for orderly expansion of the community with timely extensions of necessary urban services as they are available.

The USL defines areas where capital improvement programs and community plans should schedule extensions to public services and utilities needed for urban development. As improvements are scheduled and constructed, the USL may be expanded accordingly. Areas of communities located between the urban service and urban reserve lines are sometimes designated on the LUE maps for urban uses, at Residential Single-Family densities or greater. In such areas the land use categories applied are "holding zones," where development of designated uses would be appropriate when urban services and facilities can be provided and the USL is amended to include those areas. Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance contain standards identifying appropriate interim uses and densities where particular uses could not be compatibly established in advance of full urban services.

Expansion of a USL is accomplished through an amendment of the Land Use Element, and should occur after LAFCO has amended the corresponding sphere of service line (see also Section H below).

F. VILLAGE RESERVE LINES

There are many areas in the county where homes are grouped in settlements of greater density than surrounding rural areas, but which are not self-sufficient communities. In past planning studies, such communities have often been overlooked, remaining undistinguished from the surrounding countryside. The LUE recognizes these villages as having both individual character and unique problems, as well as needing specialized solutions to their problems. People living in these villages identify with a local character and often feel protective of their village life-style. The village reserve lines (VRL) distinguish developed areas from the surrounding rural countryside. A land use plan has been developed for each village, with particular attention given to their unique problems, opportunities and development potentials. Village plans are found in the LUE area plans and village reserve lines are established for:

Black Lake	Garden Farms	Oak Shores	Whitley Gardens
California Valley	Heritage Village	Palo Mesa	Woodlands
Callender/Garrett	Los Berros	Pozo	
Creston	Los Ranchos/Edna	San Simeon Acres	

ORDERLY PHASING OF COMMUNITY EXPANSION WITHIN AN URBAN RESERVE LINE

LEGEND

URBAN RESERVE LINE
Boundary between urban land uses and rural countryside. Defines primary area for urban growth during twenty year horizon of Land Use Element.

URBAN SERVICE LINE
Area where urban services exist or are to be extended within the five to ten years after each annual LUE review. USL reviewed yearly to evaluate whether location is realistic in terms of community growth patterns and capacity of community resources.

DEVELOPED AREA
Areas within the community that are already substantially developed.

PROPOSED URBAN EXPANSION AREA
Ares for future urban uses and densities which will need full urban services, especially community water and sewer systems.

PROPOSED SUBURBAN EXPANSION AREA
Planned for future suburban uses and densities, requiring community water but able to accommodate individual septic tanks on an interim basis.

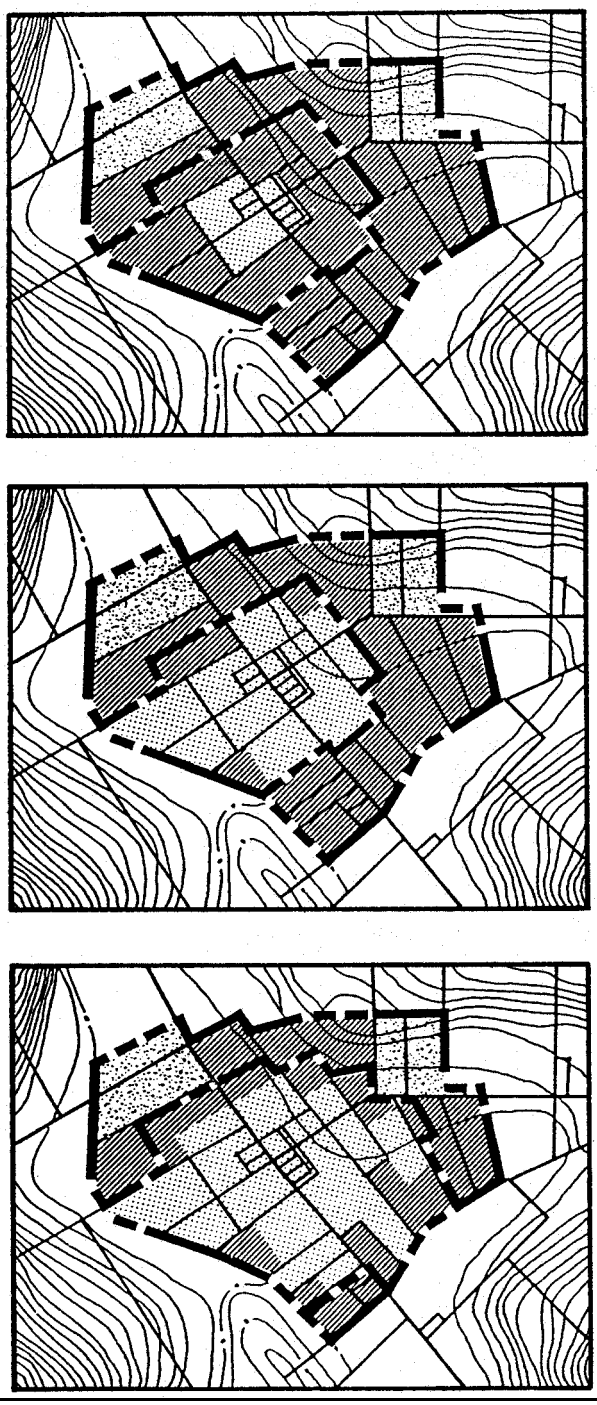


Figure 4-1: Urban Reserve and Urban Services Lines

G. APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF SERVICE

The urban and village reserve lines establish the boundary between urban and rural (city and country) land uses and the different types of public services needed for area residents. Table H indicates the types of services that generally would be appropriate in areas with urban, suburban and rural densities as shown in the Land Use Element area plans.

TABLE H

LEVELS OF SERVICE

Urban Densities	Suburban Densities	Rural Densities
Community Water System	Community Water System	Individual Wells
Public Sewers	Septic Tank Maintenance	Septic Tanks
Police Service	Police Service	Police Service
Fire Protection	Fire Protection	Fire Protection
Parks	Parks	Parks
Street Improvements	Street Improvements	Road Improvements
Street Trees		
Lighting		
Street Sweeping		
Drainage	Drainage	Drainage
Solid Waste Pickup	Solid Waste Pickup	Solid Waste Pickup
Ambulance	Ambulance	Ambulance
Libraries	Libraries	Libraries (Mobile)
Improvement Districts	Improvement Districts	Improvement Districts
Open Space Maintenance	Open Space Maintenance	
Cultural Facilities		
Schools	Schools	Schools

In rural areas outside the urban reserve line that are experiencing long term physical hardship due to local groundwater shortages, it may become appropriate to establish an urban level community service system for water service only. Consideration should be given to the goals provided above in Section C. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES. Prior to establishment of community water service within a rural area, the affected area plan and Article 9 must be amended to identify a specific water hardship area, to provide policies that explain the justification and objectives for allowing the establishment of community water service, and to provide the standards by which to implement these policies. [Added 1993, Ord. 2614]

H. LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

The California Government Code (Section 56301) states that one purpose of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is "...the discouragement of urban sprawl and the encouragement of the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances." In order to see that such orderly formation and development is carried out, the code further directs that "...the Local Agency Formation Commission shall develop and determine the Sphere of Influence of each local governmental agency within the county."

The San Luis Obispo County LAFCO has adopted general policies and criteria for spheres of influence. Those criteria contain the following definitions:

Spheres of Influence: Lines adopted by LAFCO that will delineate the probable ultimate physical boundaries and limits of local governmental agency service areas for a 10-20 year period. Many factors are considered, including the general plans of the various cities, boundary lines of existing special districts and the county urban reserve lines.

Sphere of Service: The area around a community, city or special district where short-term growth (10-year period) will be considered, and within which urban services are planned to be provided. An agency's capital improvement program assists in determining the sphere of service.

The definitions of the sphere of influence and sphere of service lines correspond directly to the definitions of the urban reserve and urban services lines (respectively) in the Land Use Element. The Land Use Element provides data useful to LAFCO in establishing Spheres of Influence and fulfilling its mandate to ensure that local governmental agencies undergo orderly formation and development.

Once spheres of influence are adopted by LAFCO they become "...a factor in making regular decisions on proposals over which it has jurisdiction. The commission may recommend governmental reorganizations to particular agencies in the county, using the spheres of influence as the basis for such recommendation...." The factors evaluated by LAFCO in determining the sphere of influence of each local governmental entity include:

1. The maximum possible service area of the agency based upon present and possible service capabilities of the agency.

2. The range of services the agency is providing or could provide.

3. The projected future population growth of the area.

4. The type of development occurring or planned for the area, including, but not limited to, residential, commercial, and industrial development.

5. The present and probable future service needs of the area.

6. Local governmental agencies presently providing services to such area and the present level, range and adequacy of services provided by such existing local governmental agencies.

7. The existence of social and economic interdependence and interaction between the area within the boundaries of a local governmental agency and the areas that surround it and could be considered within the agency's sphere of influence.

8. The existence of agricultural preserves within the area being considered for inclusion within an agency's sphere of influence and the effects of their inclusion on maintaining their physical and economic integrity.

Many of the same factors affecting establishment of the LAFCo spheres of influence are also considered in locating the urban reserve, urban service and village reserve lines in the LUE. Continued coordination in the future between the LUE and the spheres of influence will support the orderly growth of county communities and will also support service agencies in keeping pace with that growth.

CHAPTER 5: CIRCULATION ELEMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

Transportation has greater significance in land use planning than being viewed simply as various means of travel. Transportation and land use are interdependent. Critical relationships and interactions exist between transportation and aspects of land use such as housing, open space, recreation and economic development. The close relationship between the circulation system and land use is also recognized in the state guidelines for preparation of a circulation element, which require coordination with the Land Use Element.

This chapter constitutes the Circulation Element of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan, in conjunction with the Circulation chapters of the Land Use Element (LUE) area plans. This Circulation Element supersedes and replaces the 1979 County Transportation Plan. Goals, objectives and policies in this chapter are implemented through the LUE area plans, which contain circulation plan maps and recommend street and highway projects.

Where noted in specific sections of this chapter, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which is prepared by the San Luis Obispo Area Coordinating Council, is incorporated by reference as part of the County Circulation Element. Relevant information concerning all non-highway transportation, for example, public transit or bicycles, is more detailed in the RTP than necessary to repeat here. This chapter discusses the system-level considerations and terminology that provide the basis for discussion and recommendations in the area plans.

B. MAJOR ISSUES

1. The trend of increasing traffic on streets, roads and highways within the unincorporated county has resulted in large part from development within the county urban and rural areas as well as the incorporated cities. Traffic congestion is beginning to occur in many areas as the street system is not designed for the levels of development allowed by the cities and county. If growth continues as projected, the county will need to accommodate increased traffic by funding large scale road improvements and developing alternative programs to minimize impacts on safe public travel.

2. Local, state and federal sources of funding for major road and highway improvements are estimated to be insufficient to accommodate projected development and population growth within the Land Use Element's build-out capacity. New sources of funding should be considered, such as a countywide sales tax increase, assessment districts, public improvement bonds, development impact fees, or a visitor occupancy tax. With the uncertainty of new funding sources being approved, the present road and highway system is a constraint on planning for continued growth.

3. Funding from the state for public transit and car pooling has priority status, but a strong constituency for a convenient system has not emerged to justify substantial local commitments of available state funding. Ridership remains low and does not reduce automobile travel significantly.

Transit and car pooling should be increased to reduce projected roadway congestion, energy consumption and air pollution. Increased funding for transit should be considered as an alternative when road improvement funding is proposed.

4. As major new roads, marinas or airport facilities are developed, they can cause unanticipated adverse impacts on the health, safety and welfare of citizens and on the environment. For example, airplane noise impacts have affected residential development around San Luis Obispo County Airport; widening of Los Osos Valley Road in Los Osos causes additional noise impacts on adjacent residences; widening of Avila Road to serve projected traffic would damage the creek and hillside environment and reduce scenic quality. Land use compatibility is a concern due to increasing pressure for development where the land use plan may conflict with transportation capacities and objectives

C. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals identify public desires to address planning issues with a certain overall effort and perspective. They can provide a reference point to assess issues and determine how they should be resolved. The following goals are also listed in Chapter 1 along with land use and resource-related goals.

1. Provide for a land use pattern and rate of population growth that will not exceed the financial ability of the county and its residents to expand and maintain the circulation system.

2. Plan transportation system improvements to provide for, but not exceed, the capacities that are needed to serve the travel demand generated by the year 2010 population, consistent with the land use patterns allowed by the Land Use Element and the cities' general plans, so that growth is not facilitated or induced in inappropriate amounts or locations.

3. Integrate land use and transportation planning so that necessary transportation facilities and services can be provided to accommodate urban and rural development.

4. Coordinate the transportation system between different modes of travel, sensitive to the needs and desires of citizens in a manner that will provide an optimum benefit for the investment of public funds.

5. Recognize public transit and car pooling as very important components of the county's strategy to provide adequate circulation and to reduce dependency on the automobile.

6. Develop and coordinate transportation programs that reinforce federal, state, regional and local agency goals.

7. Design a transportation system that provides for safe travel within attainable, feasible economic and technical means.

8. Design transportation facilities with the intent to preserve important natural resources and features, promote the esthetic quality of the region and minimize environmental changes.

9. Develop and enhance a system of scenic roads and highways through areas of scenic beauty without imposing undue restrictions on private property, or unnecessarily restricting the placement of agricultural support facilities in agricultural and rural areas.

10. Encourage policies for new development to finance adequate additional circulation and access as a result of increased traffic it will cause.

11. Encourage new development to provide public transit access and pedestrian and bicycle pathways from residential areas to shopping areas, businesses and public facilities.

Objectives and policies

With the perspective provided by these goals, the Circulation Element provides an analysis of issues and recommends actions through the Land Use Element area plans and in the Regional Transportation Plan where referenced. As area plans are updated, issues are identified and objectives are set for several types of actions. The area plans include programs for agencies to complete mapping locations of major thoroughfares, and descriptions of major transportation routes and public utilities, recommended right-of-way improvements. Standards for development and subdivisions are contained within the Land Use Ordinance.

D. EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

San Luis Obispo County's Transportation System as of 1988 is composed of several state highways, one freeway, numerous county routes, several local and regional transit systems, rail passenger and freight service, three public airports and two public harbors. Travel within the county is a function of the distribution and size of population and economic activity within and outside the county.

Travel patterns are increasingly affected by the dispersal of housing away from economic activity and the overall low density of land uses with reliance on the automobile and increased commuting becoming more apparent. Except for long-distance rail transit on Amtrak, public transit is primarily used by a dependent population such as the elderly, students and the handicapped.

Road and Highway Network

There are over 1,900 miles of roadway in the county ranging from freeways to unsurfaced roads. Surface travel in the county is concentrated along two major corridors: 1) The north-south corridor along Highway 101 from Santa Maria, just south of the county line, to the northern county line about 14 miles north of Paso Robles, and 2) the Highway 1 coastal corridor. Other significant travel patterns are oriented along the east-west corridors of Highway 41 and 46 and Los Osos Valley Road between San Luis Obispo and Los Osos. There are 341 miles of state highways in the county. The county road system contains 1300 miles, of which almost 50 percent is part of the federal aid select system, with about one-third of that classified as federal aid secondary systems. The remainder of the roads in the county are contained within the incorporated cities

Bikeways

The county and cities establish bicycle paths and/or lanes in coordination with the Regional Transportation Plan, which proposes an extensive bikeway network. Bikeways receive funding from state grants, local general funds and developer contributions with new development. Bicycle travel is increasing throughout the county as a vital transportation means as traffic congestion, recreation preferences and concern for the environment increase.

Public Transit

Local transit systems are presently in operation in the cities of Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo, and in South County offering service to Grover City, Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach and Oceano. Dial-A-Ride Systems provide intra-community transit in Morro Bay, Atascadero and Los Osos. Inter-urban systems operate between San Luis Obispo City and South County, Los Osos and the North Coast. For interregional travel, San Luis Obispo County is served by the Greyhound Lines along Highway 101 and Orangebelt Stages on Highway 46.

Rail Transit

Rail passenger service is provided by Southern Pacific under contract to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, commonly referred to as Amtrak. At the present time, service is provided to only one station in the county, at San Luis Obispo. One train a day travels each way to San Francisco and Los Angeles serving an average of 150 persons per day in each direction.

Air

Scheduled air passenger service is provided at two airports within the county - one airline at Paso Robles and three at San Luis Obispo. A third public airport operates for general aviation at Oceano, operated by the Oceano Community Services District.

Harbors

Harbor usage is concentrated in three major activities - petroleum shipping, commercial fishing, and recreational boating. The major harbors in the county are San Luis Bay, Morro Bay and Estero Bay. San Luis Bay contains two piers and a boat mooring area operated by Port San Luis Harbor District, and one tanker pier operated by Unocal. Estero Bay has a tanker pier owned by Standard Oil Company, and there are also moorings jointly used by Texaco, PG&E, and the U.S. Navy. The city of Morro Bay operates a harbor with moorings, berths, commercial and recreational piers and a Coast Guard Station.

Pipe and Transmission Lines

There are presently three types of pipelines in the county: Aqueducts operated by various water agencies, natural gas lines operated by the utility companies, and petroleum product pipelines under a number of private firms and governmental agencies. Two electric generating plants export power out of the county over high voltage transmission lines to the east and northeast.

Terminals

The county contains numerous terminals which serve as the interface between various modes. Examples of major terminals include the Amtrak Station in San Luis Obispo, the harbor facilities in Morro Bay and at Port San Luis, the aircraft facilities for cargo and passengers at San Luis Obispo and Paso Robles Airports, and the Greyhound Bus Terminal at San Luis Obispo, among others.

E. CIRCULATION SYSTEM DEFINITIONS

The area plans of the Land Use Element provide road classifications on the basis of local circulation needs, with detailed information regarding the location of proposed improvements. Where appropriate, the area plans also set special programs and standards for areawide or local improvements. In general, the Standard Improvement Specifications and Drawings, published by the Public Works Department, provide minimum standards and criteria for the design and review of proposed streets and roadways throughout the county.

The following definitions of the various components of the street circulation system are used in the Land Use Element to describe how roads function to carry traffic between destinations. The Circulation Plan Maps in the area plans show the locations of roads according to these functional classifications. Right-of-way (R/W) widths are mentioned for general information only, since the actual right-of-way widths are determined by the county Standard Improvement Specifications and Drawings, based on the volume of traffic. The improvement standards should be reviewed periodically for consistency with the objectives and policies of the Land Use Element Area Plans.

Principal Arterial Roads
A freeway, expressways, or principal county road which connects major population centers and other points of traffic generation. These roads have controlled access and are not intended for local trips.
((R/W) varies)

Urban/Rural Arterial Road
A road that carries traffic between principal arterial roads, centers of population, or carries large volumes of traffic within an urban or rural area. Arterials are not intended to provide primary access to residences, and are best used for controlled access to areas of retail and service commercial uses, industrial facilities and major community facilities.
(Divided - 108-foot R/W)
(Undivided - 92-foot R/W)

Urban/Rural Collector Road
A road that enables traffic to move to and from local roads, arterial roads and activity centers. Collectors are the principal arterial of residential areas and often carry a relatively high volume of traffic. A collector also has the potential for sustaining minor retail establishments. Limits on residential driveway access should be based upon traffic volumes, parcel sizes and sight distances.
(60-foot R/W)

Local Road
A road that is used primarily for access to adjacent property.
(50-foot R/W)

Grade Separation
A crossing of two transportation routes at different levels such as two roads, or a road and a railroad.

Interchange
A grade separation which includes ramps connecting the separated roadways to allow traffic to change between routes.

F. STREET DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The location and design of streets can have a major effect on adjacent land uses. The design of residential streets is particularly important since improper design of such routes can have a long-term adverse effect on residents using them. The following guidelines offer general design parameters for providing safe, convenient routes for movement of automobiles, bicycles and pedestrians within residential neighborhoods and local commercial areas.

General Design Guidelines

a. Street and pedestrian circulation patterns in newly developed areas should be compatible with the land use recommendations of the community plans for the planning areas.

b. Arterial roads and streets should be developed to provide appropriate service for local trips, to minimize traffic on principal arterials.

c. Pedestrian circulation should be expressly addressed in street designs so that walking is accommodated by various methods of implementation.

d. New street network designs should minimize the overall length of streets.

e. Driveway entrances should be avoided on arterials.

f. Local residential streets should generally be designed to serve limited, localized access needs, rather than through traffic.

g. All dwellings and structures should be readily accessible to emergency and service vehicles.

h. Street standards should be developed using the guidelines of the "Guide to Urban and Rural Street Design" published by the association of State and Highway Transportation Officials.

i. Horizontal and vertical street alignments should be located to minimize grading and to incorporate natural ground contours as much as possible without creating hazards to traffic, and should be consistent with other design objectives.

j. Street layouts should be planned to avoid adverse concentration of storm water runoff.

k. Street design should promote safe bicycling by considering the placement of bike lanes that will provide for the safety of the cyclist as well as the automobile driver with whom they share the streets.

Local Street Intersections

Residential street layouts should generally be designed to minimize the use of four-way local street intersections by avoiding conventional gridiron street layout patterns.

Parking

Adequate off-street parking for residents and guests, including spaces for recreational vehicles, should be provided in both urban and rural areas.

Street Landscaping

a. Street landscaping should be included in planned street designs to improve the appearance and aesthetic value of urban and village areas.

b. Landscaping should be planned for safety and beauty, to provide buffering to minimize conflicts between streets, parking, structures, and pedestrian paths.

c. New street development projects should include landscaping along with funding for its installation and maintenance, either through the county or other agencies such as community service districts.

d. The design and construction of new roads or the expansion of existing roads, to the degree that right-of-way and traffic safety allow, should incorporate and preserve natural features, such as native woodlands or significant mature trees, rock outcrops and other landmarks.

e. Implementation of street landscaping projects should occur after the assignment of departmental responsibilities for installation and maintenance and discussion of funding sources and methods by the Board of Supervisors. For example, the Public Works and General Services Departments may develop a coordinated program for design and a funding mechanism through the Public Works Department, and installation and maintenance by the General Services Department. These decisions should be made to avoid problems with inadequate staffing or financial capability to develop and maintain projects.

Alternative Street Design

Due to the considerations listed above, special street designs may be necessary in unique local situations, such as in developments where public roads are not a consideration. In such cases, special design standards or criteria may be utilized that do not conform to the County Standard Improvement Specifications and Drawings.

Some special design needs are noted in the Land Use Element area plans as guidelines in the Circulation chapter programs or as requirements in Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance (Community Planning Standards). Special designs that are available in the "Guide to Urban and Rural Street Design," or other design guidebooks will be necessary to implement them. Other special design needs may come to light during review of applications for land use permits and subdivisions or capital improvement projects, for example to preserve a woodland or to create a paved pathway separate from a street. In such cases, streets should be designed to accommodate those needs if traffic safety can be assured.

Street Construction

Before the construction of new or expanded streets and roads, detailed plans must be developed. At that stage, engineering feasibility studies and geometric designs should carry out the guidelines listed in the previous sections with the coordination of Planning and Public Works Department staff as a general plan conformity report is prepared.

An environmental determination is then made for the preliminary design of each project. The Public Works Department prepares construction drawings based on the process of plan development and the environmental determination.

G. SCENIC HIGHWAYS

The designation of scenic highways is intended to conserve and enhance the natural scenic beauty occurring along portions of county and state highways. The rural areas of San Luis Obispo County have many scenic attributes that contribute to the pleasure of driving through them. Whether these features of the landscape are highly unusual, such as the volcanic morros between San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay, or the more typical oak-studded ranch, they play an important role identifying the county as a special place. Agricultural operations and facilities in the rural areas also help make many of the roads very scenic and contribute to the quality of the rural areas of the county. Together, these natural and built features provide a scenic environment that encourages the growth of recreation and tourist industries that are major parts of the local economy. Development and enhancement of the scenic roads and highways system should be accomplished without undue restrictions on private property or unnecessary burdens on agricultural operations.

This section of the Circulation Element incorporates the scenic highways element contained in the Agriculture and Open Space Element, which includes more detailed mapped designations and policies for the protection of scenic highway corridors.

The following local objectives are stated to implement the Agriculture and Open Space Element policy that scenic highway provisions should be applied to all highways so designated within the county:

1. Identify scenic areas and features within view of state highways, city streets, and county roads in the Agriculture and Open Space Element and incorporate them into the applicable Land Use Element area plan, designating them within Sensitive Resource Areas.

2. Adopt programs in the Land Use Element area plans and standards in the Land Use Ordinance to protect the scenic quality of identified areas and to maintain views from designated scenic roads and highways. Provide special attention to the location, siting and design of visible structures, access roads and outdoor advertising, while ensuring that there will not be undue restrictions on private property or agricultural operations. Encourage area native plants in landscaping. Promote placing utilities underground where feasible.

3. Ensure that the location, design and construction of each scenic road or highway blend into and complement the scenic corridor, by coordinating among involved agencies for the integrated design of the project.

4. Promote special scenic treatment and design within scenic road and highway rights-of-way, to include highway directional signs, guardrails and fences, lighting, provisions of scenic outlooks, frontage roads, grading, vegetation and highway structures.

H. BIKEWAYS

Bikeways are several types of facilities designed for safe bicycle travel, including fully separated paths, restricted bike lanes, or signed streets. The Circulation Element incorporates the Bikeways Element of the Regional Transportation Plan as though fully set forth here, for detailed planning and implementation of regionally significant bikeways. Local bikeways are addressed in the Circulation chapters of the Land Use Element area plans.

I. PUBLIC TRANSIT

Public transit serves the transportation needs of large numbers of people and low-mobility groups (those without cars) more efficiently than automobiles. Transit policies and plans of the county are integrated with local and regional systems in the Transit portion of the Regional Transportation Plan, which is incorporated by reference as though it were fully stated here.

The county has an important role in planning and expanding the Regional Transit System because the road system in unincorporated areas is projected to be increasingly impacted by vehicle travel. A more productive and convenient transit system will be necessary to offset increasingly congested streets and highways effectively.

Objectives for Public Transit

1. Utilize transit planning as an equal consideration in decisions on using transportation funding for street and highway improvements, during the county budgetary process and the Area Coordinating Council's Unmet Transit Needs process.

2. Expand the land use planning process to include the consideration of transit facility needs in the location and intensity of development, by integrating commercial and residential areas with transit networks.

3. Expand the consideration of transit facilities in the land use permit process, by encouraging mixed-use commercial and residential projects, planned unit developments, participation by developers in providing transit facilities, park and ride lots and implementation of vehicle trip-reduction programs.

4. Consider the enactment of Traffic Mitigation and Vehicle Trip-Reduction Ordinances that would reduce the amount of traffic from large-scale institutions, developments or employers that would occur at peak commuting hours, such as staggered hours or car pooling incentives.

5. Pursue transportation demand management strategies as contained in the Regional Transportation Plan that will manage demand by encouraging people to drive less, for instance, with preferential parking for car poolers.

J. AIRPORTS

Airports provide base facilities for air transportation and air freight and meet recreational needs. The Land Use Element designates areas around airports for limited commercial, industrial, recreational or low-density residential uses, as well as agricultural and open space uses, based upon the characteristics of the individual airports. Specific development criteria for airport facilities and identification of types of land uses that may be compatible with airports are defined in the following documents:

1. The Aviation Element of the county Transportation Plan.

2. The San Luis Obispo County Airport Land Use Plan.

3. The Oceano County Airport Land Use Plan.

4. The Paso Robles City Airport Land Use Plan.

Land use recommendations and standards of the above-mentioned documents are refined in the planning areas through application of the Airport Review combining designation, discussed in Chapter 7.

K. EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

In areas where there is interest in establishing equestrian trails, the county should work with equestrian groups, property owners, and agriculturalists to determine whether rights-of-way may be secured to serve this need while respecting and protecting adjacent uses and ownerships.

L. OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES

In addition to streets, public transit and airports, other transportation modes affecting land use planning include harbors and seaports, pipelines, transmission lines, rail and transportation terminals. The area plans contain policies for the local development and use of those systems. The Regional Transportation Plan contains a specific discussion of issues, programs and policies for those components of the county circulation system and it is incorporated by reference as though it were fully included here.

CHAPTER 6: LAND USE CATEGORIES

A. INTRODUCTION

The LUE land use categories identify areas for similar and compatible land uses. The land use categories provide a basic order for development while allowing a range of uses in support of diversity and choice. The land use categories support the following goals:

1. To permit orderly and beneficial development, while protecting the character of neighborhoods and communities, and the social and economic viability of the county.

2. To reconcile discordant land uses by identifying the relationships between uses that minimize land use conflicts.

3. To support preservation of the county's agricultural industry and the soils essential to agriculture.

4. To support protection and preservation of county open space and recreational resources while providing for appropriate development.

5. To provide areas where agricultural, residential, commercial and industrial uses may be developed in harmonious patterns and with all the necessities for satisfactory living and working environments.

6. To establish density patterns related to both the physical and man-made characteristics of land.

Land Use Categories

Thirteen land use categories provide a response to the variety of natural and man-made features of the landscape, population growth trends and projections, existing county policies as represented by existing general plans and zoning, and public attitudes about land use. The land use categories are (in order of increasing intensity of use):

Open Space	Residential Multi-Family
Agriculture	Recreation
Rural Lands	Office and Professional
Residential Rural	Commercial Retail
Residential Suburban	Commercial Service
Residential Single-Family	Industrial
Public Facilities	

The text and maps of the Land Use Element apply the land use categories to properties as the adopted county policy for future growth and land use. The official maps, which are available at the Department of Planning and Building, show the actual locations of the land use categories. The LUE area plans include report maps that reproduce the official maps at a smaller scale, and they include text and programs that apply to the land use categories.

Voluntary Transfer of Development Credits (TDCs)

Countywide Voluntary TDC Program

A voluntary Transfer of Development Credits (TDC) Program is a land use planning tool that allows the right to develop (called credits) to be separated from one site (the sending site) and moved to another (the receiving site). The transfer of the credits reduces the development possible on the sending site and increases the development possible on the receiving site.

Consistent with the applicable goals in Chapter 1 of this element, the voluntary TDC Program will relocate development from environmentally sensitive land, land with agricultural capability, or antiquated subdivisions to more suitable areas. The authority to establish a voluntary TDC Program is within the scope of police power established in Article XI, Section 7 of the State Constitution. The establishment of this voluntary program is also an exercise of the county's planning and zoning authority as set forth in the California Planning and Zoning Law, Title 7, Division One of the Government Code.

There are a number of objectives the voluntary TDC Program seeks to accomplish. The primary purpose is to promote appropriate settlement patterns while maintaining an overall level of development within the capacities of transportation and other public service systems. As a voluntary countywide program it endeavors to: protect both land with agricultural capability and the business of agriculture itself; reduce development potential within land divisions or other areas that do not have adequate services for residents; protect important or extraordinary natural areas, habitats or cultural resources; reduce development potential in areas that may have the potential for landslides, fires, or other hazards; and reduce air quality impacts associated with locating residential development distant from jobs, schools, shopping and recreation.

This program is voluntary, incentive-based, and market-driven between willing sellers and willing buyers. Landowners are not obligated to use this technique to request an amendment to the general plan or to subdivide property in conformance with existing regulations.

The voluntary TDC ordinance is adopted in the Land Use Ordinance. The ordinance allows the voluntary transfer of development potential from a sending site to a receiving site. The receiving site would then be allowed to develop at a higher density than would otherwise be allowed by the land use category. The ordinance sets forth the criteria for an applicant to voluntarily request designation as either a sending or receiving site, the means of assigning credits to both the sending and receiving sites, and the procedures for transferring credits from one landowner to another. Both the sending and receiving sites must conform to all standards and criteria for the use of TDCs as set forth in the Land Use Ordinance.

Community-Based TDC Programs

Community-based or special focus TDC Programs are programs developed for a specific unincorporated community or special focus area. **They may contain provisions other than those standards set forth in the Land Use Ordinance for the Countywide TDC Program.** Establishment of these TDC programs are encouraged and in many instances may be preferable to using the county-wide program.

Community-based or special focus programs are locations and standards established through community or area input where properties are eligible for consideration as specific sending and receiving sites and where there is a logical contiguous area (such as a planning area) or an area of special focus (such as a watershed area or the Morros). These areas are then designated through the individual area plans. The purpose of establishing these types of TDC programs is to allow a community or area to develop a TDC program that is tailored to the individual community's or area's goals.

Development of these programs can occur through an area plan update, through a request of the area property owners, or through an area's community advisory group. The request would be for an amendment to either an area plan or the Land Use Ordinance, or both. If a community-based or special focus program is requested outside of an area plan update and an amendment to an area plan is requested, that request will be considered for authorization and presented to the Board of Supervisors.

The geographic boundaries of individual adopted programs can be found in the "Combining Designations" chapter of each area plan. Properties within a community-based or special focus TDC program area may be designated with the Transfer of Development Credit Sending (TDCS) or Receiving (TDCR) Combining Designation. However this designation wouldn't have any effect until such time as development meeting the standards of the program is voluntarily proposed by the landowner and approved by the county. If special standards or requirements are established as part of the program, those would be found in Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance.

An individual project located outside of a community-based or special focus TDC program area does not have to meet the standards of that program. Conversely, a project does not have to be within a community-based or special focus TDC program area in order to participate in the countywide TDC Program as authorized by the Land Use Element with standards set forth in the Land Use Ordinance.

[Added 1996, Ord. 2776; Amended 1999, Ord. 2882]

Population Density

Residential population is an important measure of the Land Use Element's effects on communities and the environment. Population density is the number of people that can be expected to occupy a given area, expressed in the Land Use Element as people per acre or acres per person. The densities that can be expected to be achieved in each of the land use categories are listed in Table N.

Residential population densities will occur in all land use categories except industrial and public facilities. However, the Commercial Retail, Commercial Service, Office and Professional and Recreation categories only allow residences as secondary uses or specially permitted uses in certain situations. Residential density within each of the other land use categories is allowed in a range of parcel sizes or building densities, depending on if the type of proposed development is a subdivision of land or a project such as apartments or a mobilehome park. Within each category parcel size range, higher density (more people per acre) can be achieved if criteria that apply to these different types of development, found in the Land Use Ordinance are met. Table N also refers to the sections in the Land Use Ordinance that set the exact requirements for property development of residential density. [Amended 1996, Ord. 2776]

Population density will vary throughout the county depending on the location of each area and its population characteristics. Household population can vary since some unincorporated areas are bedroom communities with many young families and other areas are popular for senior citizens. Some communities such as Los Osos have many small parcels in older subdivisions; other towns such as Nipomo will develop with larger parcels now considered to be standard size. The local differences in density are addressed in the LUE area plans in the land use chapters and by the standards and criteria related to site location and characteristics in the Land Use Ordinance.

Building Intensity

Non-residential development may utilize up to 40 per-cent of each site in ground flood building area. This amount will normally require 60 percent of each site for parking, landscaping and setbacks required by the Land Use Ordinance. However, if required parking is reduced on-site by partial waiver or is located off-site, lot coverage may be increased to the amounts set by Table N. In many cases where larger or more intensive uses necessitate larger parking lots, the area for parking spaces, aisles and entrances may reduce the building area. Additional floors may also reduce the amount of a building's site coverage in order to provide room for more required parking spaces, unless a parking structure is also developed. The building intensity ratio is implemented through the standards of the Land Use Ordinance.

Parcel Size Ranges

The Land Use Element uses a range of minimum parcel sizes for the creation of new lots in each land use category (shown in Table N). The ranges identified in each of the land use categories are based upon:

1. The need to provide flexibility in lot sizes to respond to particular site conditions, and also to protect existing and proposed neighborhoods from inappropriate levels of development.

2. The need for new development to be compatible with both existing adjacent uses, as well as planned future developments.

3. The need to provide standards to control the intensity of development in order to avoid, reduce or eliminate adverse environmental impacts.

Proposed land divisions and residential development proposals are evaluated by using the standards for minimum parcel size in the Land Use Ordinance, Chapter 22.22, which includes site design standards that apply to the location and characteristics of a site and its vicinity. These standards are the county's policy on how each category's range of parcel sizes is utilized to determine the minimum lot size for a proposed land division.

However, if any lot size standards of Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance differ from or conflict with the minimum lot size standards of Chapter 22.22 of the Land Use Ordinance, Article 9 takes precedence over Chapter 22.22.

[Amended 1989, Ord. 2411].

Projects participating in the voluntary Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) Program, involving the transfer of development potential from one site (sending site) to another site (receiving site) at a higher density than would otherwise be allowed by the land use category shown in Table N, may be allowed where the sites conform to the standards and criteria for the use of TDCs in the Land Use Ordinance.

[Added 1996, Ord. 2776; Amended 1999, Ord. 2882]

TABLE N
TYPICAL POPULATION DENSITIES, BUILDING INTENSITIES AND PARCEL SIZE RANGES FOR LAND USE CATEGORIES

Land Use Category	Subdivision Parcel Size Range[1]	Building Intensity[5]	Population Density[2]	LUO Section
Agriculture	320 to 20 acres	160 acres to 10 acres per dwelling[3] Farm support quarters: 320 to 20 acres per dwelling	64 to 4 acres per person 128 to 8 acres per person	22.22.040 22.30.480
Rural Lands	320 to 20 acres	160 to 10 acres per dwelling	64 to 4 acres per person	22.22.050 22.10.130A.1.
Residential Rural	20 to 5 acres	20 to 5 acres per dwelling	8 to 2 acres per person	22.22.060
		Secondary dwellings at one dwelling per parcel	4 acres to 1 acre per person	22.30.470
Residential Suburban	5 acres to 1 acre	5 to 1 acre per dwelling	2 acres per person to 2.5 persons per acre	22.22.070
		Secondary dwellings at one dwelling per parcel	1 acre per person to 5 persons per acre	22.30.470
		Mobile home parks to 8 dwellings per acre	20 persons per acre	22.30.440
Residential Single Family	1 acre to 6,000 square feet[4]	1 acre per dwelling to 7 dwellings per acre	2.5 to 18 persons per acre	22.22.080
		Secondary dwellings at one dwelling per parcel	5 to 36 persons per acre	22.30.470
		1,750 square feet per dwelling for existing parcels	62 persons per acre	22.10.110 22.10.130
		Mobile home parks to 8 dwellings per acre	20 persons per acre	22.30.440
Residential Multi-Family	1 acre to 6,000 square feet[4]	1 to 38 dwellings per acre	2.5 to 95 persons per acre	22.22.080
		Mobile home parks to 8 dwellings per acre	20 persons per acre	22.30.440
Recreation		40% to 100% site coverage for non-residential buildings		
	20 acres to one acre outside urban and village areas	20 acres to one acre per dwelling	8 acres per person to 2.5 persons per acre	22.22.120

TABLE N
TYPICAL POPULATION DENSITIES, BUILDING INTENSITIES AND PARCEL SIZE RANGES FOR LAND USE CATEGORIES

Land Use Category	Subdivision Parcel Size Range[1]	Building Intensity[5]	Population Density[2]	LUO Section
Recreation - Con't	20 acres to 6,000 sq. ft. inside urban and village areas[4]	20 acres per dwelling to 7 dwellings per acre	8 acres per person to 18 persons per acre	
		Mobile home parks to 8 dwellings per acre	20 persons per acre	22.30.440
		8 to 38 multi-family dwellings per acre	20 to 95 persons per acre	22.30.500
		Recreational vehicle parks at 15 dwellings per acre	38 persons per acre	22.30.440
Office and Professional	2.5 acres to 6,000 square feet[4]	40% to 100% site coverage for non-residential buildings		
		8 to 38 multi-family dwellings per acre (50% of total floor area of buildings)	1 to 95 persons per acre	22.30.490
Commercial Retail and Commercial Service	2.5 acres to 6,000 square feet[4]	1 to 38 dwellings per acre	1 to 95 persons per acre	22.22.090
		Recreational vehicle parks to 15 dwellings per acre	38 persons per acre	22.30.300
Industrial	10 acres to 6,000 square feet	40% to 100% site coverage for non-residential buildings		
		1 caretaker dwelling per parcel	to 18 persons per acre	22.22.100
Public Facilities	Minimum 6,000 square feet			22.22.110

NOTES TO TABLE N:

1. The appropriate minimum parcel size for a new land division within the ranges shown above shall be based on the characteristics of the site and vicinity, as determined by the Land Use Ordinance, Chapter 22.22 .
2. Population density is based on 2.5 persons per dwelling, per State Department of Finance, January 1987.
3. Building intensity assumes two primary dwellings on each parcel in the Agriculture and Rural Lands categories; one primary dwelling allowed on each parcel in other categories, where secondary dwellings are not allowed as a use by right but may be permitted by land use permit approval.
4. Condominium parcel sizes are to be established by the Planning Commission through individual project review, provided the common ownership parcel is within the range stated here.
5. Building intensity is dependent on the allowable uses within each land use category, as determined by Articles 2 or 9 of the Land Use Ordinance, and by the site design standards of the Land Use Ordinance.
6. A project may be approved at a density higher than otherwise allowed for the applicable land use category by Table N, where the sites conform to the standards and criteria for the use of TDCs in the Land Use Ordinance. [Added 1996, Ord. 2776; Amended 1989, Ord. 2411]

Guidelines for Amendments to Land Use Ordinance

The Land Use Ordinance guides new development so as to be in character with its surroundings and to maintain amenities for living. These principles implement the general goals of the Land Use Element that are stated in Chapter 1.

Development of new or amended Land Use Ordinance standards should be guided by the following principles for implementation of the general plan goals:

1. All developments should be designed with maximum consideration of the characteristics of project sites and their surroundings:

    a. To enhance and achieve full use of special site potentials such as natural terrain, views, vegetation, natural waterways or other features;

    b. To respect and mitigate (or avoid) special site constraints such as climatic conditions, noise, flooding, slope stability, significant vegetation or ecologically sensitive surroundings:

    c. To be compatible with present and potential adjacent land uses within the context of the area's urban, suburban or rural character.

2. Designs for proposed residential uses should include:

    a. Provisions for privacy and usable open space;

    b. Orientation and design features to shelter from prevailing winds and adverse weather, while enabling use of natural light, ventilation and shade.

3. All developments should be designed to provide safe vehicular and pedestrian movement, adequate parking for residents, guests, employees and emergency vehicles.

Guidelines for Land Use Category Amendments

In determining whether to approve a proposed land use category amendment, the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors may consider, but shall not be limited to, the following items where appropriate for the proposed land use category change under consideration:

1. Existing planning policies. Whether the proposed land use category is consistent with the following:

    a. Applicable policies in the various elements of the General Plan (Land Use, Agriculture and Open Space, Conservation, Circulation, Housing, Safety, Noise);

    b. The general goals in Chapter 1 of Framework for Planning (Part I of the Land Use Element);

    c. The purpose and character statements for land use categories in Section B, description of land use categories;

    d. Uses listed in Article 2 of the Land Use Ordinance, list of allowable uses;

e. The text and maps of the area plans (Part II of the Land Use Element); and

f. The planning area standards of Article 9 (Community Planning Standards) of the Land Use Ordinance.

2. **Area character.** Whether the proposed land use category is compatible with allowed land uses in surrounding land use categories. Whether the potential types of development resulting from a proposed amendment would adversely affect the existing or planned appearance of the countryside, neighborhood and style of development in the surrounding area.

3. **Environmental impacts.** The proposed amendment should not enable development that would cause potential significant adverse environmental impacts as determined through an environmental determination, unless such impacts can be adequately mitigated or a statement of overriding considerations can be adopted in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

4. **Accessibility/circulation.** Whether the site of the proposed amendment is located with convenient access to a road system in the vicinity that is adequate to accommodate the traffic generated by the type and intensity of development allowed by the amendment.

5. **Soils classification.** Whether the proposed amendment gives consideration to protecting prime agricultural soils (SCS Class I and II, irrigated) for potential agricultural use. Proposals in other soil classifications should be reviewed together with other site features to determine if the proposed amendment could unnecessarily limit, reduce or eliminate potentially viable agricultural uses.

6. **Slope and other terrain characteristics.** Whether site terrain would be predominantly retained in its existing configuration by development enabled by the proposed amendment. Whether development resulting from the proposed amendment would retain the overall contour of a site such that more intensive development occurs on flatter land and low-density development is accommodated by steeper terrain.

7. **Vegetation.** Whether the proposed amendment enables development that would retain significant vegetation such as oak woodlands or other mature tree forests and native plant communities that provide wildlife habitat or include rare and endangered plant or animal species.

8. **Hazards.** Whether the proposed amendment has been evaluated with respect to potential building limitations due to flood, fire or geologic hazards, so that subsequent development will be feasible in relation to the uses allowed by the proposed amendment.

9. **Existing parcel size and ownership patterns.** Whether the proposed amendment enables development of a type and scale consistent with surrounding parcel sizes and ownership patterns.

10. **Availability of public services and facilities.** Whether the proposed amendment is located in an area with demonstrated availability of needed public services and facilities and, where applicable, whether it is suitable for on-site sewage disposal and has an adequate groundwater supply. To the extent that proposed amendments will create a demand for services, amendments in the urban and village areas should demonstrate that services for water supply, sewerage, streets, public safety, schools and parks are planned to be available within the horizon year of the applicable area plan, or a capital improvement program is in effect to provide for any such services that are currently deficient, or such services and facilities will be provided as a result of approved development following the amendment.

11. **Land inventory.** Whether the amendment, with the uses it would allow, is needed to provide a sufficient supply of land for the population of the community or area that is projected within planned resources, services and facilities.

12. **Mineral Resources.** Whether the amendment proposed in an area included within the EX (Energy and Extractive Resource Area) or EX_1 (Extractive Resource Area) combining designations on the official maps of the Land Use Element would preclude resource extraction or would result in uses which adversely affect the existing operation or expansion of extraction uses. Proposals within the EX or EX_1 combining designations which would preclude resource extraction, would allow minimum residential parcel sizes of less than 10 acres or would otherwise be incompatible with resource extraction shall be approved only when the need for the particular use is determined by the Board of Supervisors to outweigh the value of keeping the potential mineral resource available for future extraction. The proposed amendment shall not enable development that would adversely affect the continuing operation or expansion of an extraction use [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498).

B. DESCRIPTION OF LAND USE CATEGORIES

This section describes the 13 land use categories in detail, including their purpose and intended character. The criteria listed for each land use category are the basis for determining actual locations where the categories should be applied.

The statements of purpose and character are to be used as criteria for evaluating whether a Land use Element amendment is appropriate for a specific site, neighborhood or community. The statements of category purpose and character are not to be used to evaluate development proposals. The purpose statements are objectives related to the goals in Chapter 1. Character statements identify suitable features or conditions for the location, extent and timing of designating a land use category. These statements also are the basis for establishing allowable uses in Article 2 of the Land Use Ordinance.

OPEN SPACE

The Open Space category is to be applied only to lands in public fee ownership, or private lands where an open space agreement or easement has been executed between the property owner and the county. Applying the Open Space category to a parcel of land does not in and of itself, convey or imply any right of public access, use, trespass or violation of privacy.

Purpose

a. To identify land areas having value as primitive or natural areas.

b. To identify environmentally fragile areas that are at the most capable of supporting only passive recreational activities and non-structural uses.

c. To identify areas in public ownership which are reserved for wilderness use or as a wildlife or nature preserve.

d. To retain areas with fragile plant or animal communities (such as marshes and wetlands) in a natural or undisturbed state.

e. To retain natural beauty and ecological diversity.

Character

a. National forest, Bureau of Land Management or other public lands specifically reserved or proposed for watershed preservation, outdoor recreation, wilderness or wildlife/nature preserves.

b. Sites or portions of a site with natural features such as unique topography, vegetation or stream courses without a quality or extent sufficient to necessitate application of a Sensitive Resource Area combining designation. May also include environmentally sensitive habitat for animal or plant communities.

c. Areas reserved for passive, non-intensive recreational uses such as riding and hiking trails, primitive trail camps, etc.

d. Areas where the only appropriate residential use in an Open Space category would be ranger or caretaker quarters, established without division of the underlying parcel.

AGRICULTURE

Purpose

a. To recognize and retain commercial agriculture as a desirable land use and as a major segment of the county's economic base.

b. To designate areas where agriculture is the primary land use with all other uses being secondary, in direct support of agriculture.

c. To designate areas where a combination of soil types, topography, water supply, existing parcel sizes and good management practices will result in the protection of agricultural land for agricultural uses, including the production of food and fiber.

d. To designate areas where rural residential uses that are not related to agriculture would find agricultural activities a nuisance, or be incompatible.

e. To protect the agricultural basis of the county economy and encourage the open space values of agriculture to continue agricultural uses, including the production of food and fiber.

f. To recognize that agricultural activities on a small scale can supplement income from other sources, particularly where older subdivisions have resulted in parcels smaller than would currently qualify for new subdivisions within the parcel size range for the Agriculture category.

g. Support conversion of agricultural lands to other uses only when such conversion would be appropriate or because the continuing agricultural productivity of a specific site is infeasible, considering the factors in purpose statement c, above.

h. To give high priority to the protection of commercial prime and nonprime agricultural soils where the commercial viability, siting (whether inside or outside urban reserve lines), and natural resources allow for agricultural uses, including the production of food and fiber.

Character

a. Areas of prime agricultural soils, and other productive and potentially productive lands located inside and outside of urban and village reserve lines where land use conflicts with other adjacent uses can be mitigated.

b. Areas for agricultural processing and its support services.

c. Areas where the residential uses allowed are for property owners or employees actively engaged in agricultural production on the same property.

d. All lands previously designated as agricultural preserve, whether or not under contract, according to the adopted agricultural preserve rules of procedure.

e. Lands that may be eligible for agricultural preserve if the rules of procedure are satisfied.

f. Areas where existing land uses are mainly truck crops, specialty crops, row and field crops, irrigated crops and pasture, irrigated vineyards and orchards, dry farm orchards and vineyards, dry farm and grain, grazing and rangeland.

g. Areas where parcel sizes and ownership patterns are sufficiently large to make agricultural operations economically viable, given other features such as soil types, water supply, topography and commercial potential through optimum management.

h. Areas with an existing pattern of smaller parcels that cannot support self-sustaining agricultural operations, but where physical factors of soil, water supply and topography would support agricultural production.

RURAL LANDS

Purpose

a. To encourage rural development at very low densities that maximizes preservation of open space, watershed and wildlife habitat areas.

b. To retain large parcel sizes where rural residences may be established on lands having open space value but limited agricultural potential.

c. To maintain low population densities in rural areas outside of urban and village reserve lines where an open and natural countryside with very low development intensity is preferred.

d. To establish areas where non-agricultural activities are the primary use of the land, but where agriculture and compatible uses may co-exist.

Character

a. Areas outside urban and village reserve lines that have open space value for retaining large parcel sizes, in support of large acreage homesites for hobby farming or ranching, but are not feasible for commercial agriculture.

b. Areas of older subdivisions with an average parcel size of 19 acres or less that are located three miles or more from urban reserve lines.

c. Areas outside urban and village areas with existing land uses including limited agriculture, mining and quarry operations, public and private recreation areas, occasional rural residences and vacation cabins, and watershed, wildlife and open space uses.

d. Areas where rural residences are the primary use of the land, but where agriculture and other compatible uses such as hunting clubs, dude ranches, etc., may be found or located.

e. Areas with soils of poorer quality than in agricultural areas; vegetation consisting of grasses, woodlands, chaparral and brush which constitute a high or extreme fire hazard potential.

f. Areas where parcel sizes are sufficiently large enough to allow for the creation of at least one adequate building site and proper access to the site.

g. Lands with localized portions of limited agricultural capability, which may nevertheless be eligible for Agricultural Preserve status because of their large parcel size if criteria of the adopted rules of procedure are satisfied.

RECREATION

Purpose

a. To identify areas having recreational potential where private or public development of recreational uses can be encouraged when not in conflict with surrounding rural and agricultural uses.

b. To allow for recreation and resort-oriented development that will be incidental to outdoor recreation on the same site.

c. To allow recreation and resort-oriented development where significant public recreational resources are available in the immediate vicinity.

d. To provide for public park and recreation areas when not in conflict with surrounding rural and agricultural land uses.

Character

a. Areas of existing and/or proposed recreational uses that emphasize and retain a recreational resource on a significant portion of the site.

b. Areas shown on an adopted State Park System Master Plan or on acquisition lists of the state or county parks and recreation departments.

c. Areas of existing public recreational uses.

d. Areas with a natural or man-made recreational resource that will serve particular public recreational needs and should be protected from the encroachment of residential and commercial activity.

e. Areas where residential uses can be integrated into a mixed-use resort development, secondary to outdoor recreational activities, that is to be approved under the requirements of the Land Use Ordinance.

f. Areas reserved for active and intensive recreational activities, such as golf courses and campgrounds.

g. Existing established state, county or city park holdings, and areas of the national forest where active recreation uses exist.

RESIDENTIAL RURAL

Purpose

a. To provide for residential development at a low density compatible with a rural character and life-style which maintains the character of the open countryside and is compatible with surrounding agricultural uses.

b. To allow limited, compatible non-residential uses commensurate with rural parcel sizes.

c. To emphasize residential uses in areas where agriculture is clearly a secondary use, or where agriculture is not feasible yet large open space areas are maintained as part of a residential life-style.

d. To encourage agricultural and other open space uses as part-time or incidental "hobby" activities, such as horse raising or specialty farming.

Character

a. Areas of existing small-acreage parcels no more than three miles from urban reserve lines that are not commercially viable for agriculture, where the average parcel size within any contiguous area is below 19 acres.

b. Areas that are outside of urban and village areas and connected to them by county-maintained roads, although exceptions may be observed for existing older subdivided areas.

c. Areas with slopes generally less than 30%.

d. Areas with marginal agricultural soils.

e. Areas with a rural landscape high in visual quality (for example, woodlands, hills, rock formations, existing agriculture and ag accessory buildings) where clustering of allowed densities to less sensitive portions of a site is encouraged to be required through planning area standards.

f. Areas generally free of fragile natural resources.

g. Areas where growth will not be premature with respect to utility and public service capacities, or in conflict with agricultural, commercial, or industrial uses. Light agricultural uses are to be encouraged.

h. Areas where horses and other similar farm animals are allowed accessory to residential uses.

i. Areas where public services demands are limited, septic tanks and individual wells can suffice for required water and sewer capability.

RESIDENTIAL SUBURBAN

Purpose

a. To allow for single-family residential development on estate sized lots in a semi-rural suburban setting within the urban and village areas or in older existing rural subdivisions.

b. To allow limited, compatible non-residential uses which complement suburban neighborhoods such as animal raising or hobby farming.

c. To designate areas for lower density residential expansion within urban and village boundaries.

d. To encourage clustering of allowed densities where there are important open space attributes that are a community resource or where sensitive habitats exist.

Character

a. Areas at the outer portions of communities where open space is prominent, with residences on parcels ranging from one to five acres in size.

b. Areas within urban or village reserve lines, but outside urban service lines and programmed for less than full urban services (see Table H).

c. Although there are several areas of the residential suburban category outside urban and village reserve lines, such as Squire Canyon, Arroyo Grande Fringe and Tract 7, those areas are designated to recognize existing areas of small lots. Those areas should not be expanded and new areas not created except within urban and village reserve lines.

d. Areas where soil conditions will enable septic systems to serve adequately on larger parcels.

e. Areas where the majority of land contains slopes less than 30% (with increased lot sizes required as slope increases) and where land with slopes less than 20% is available for building sites on all proposed parcels.

f. Areas with a landscape or viewshed of high visual quality (for example, woodlands, hills, rock formations, existing agriculture and ag accessory buildings) where clustering of allowed density to less sensitive portions of a site is encouraged.

g. Areas of generally marginal agricultural land.

h. Areas generally free of fragile natural resources.

i. Areas where growth will not be premature with respect to utility and public service capacities, or in conflict with agricultural, commercial or industrial uses.

j. Areas where horses and other similar farm animals are allowed accessory to residential uses.

k. Areas where small-scale neighborhood commercial and service uses may be appropriate in limited areas if consistent with individual community plans and Land Use Ordinance standards.

RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY

Purpose

a. To provide areas for single-family homes on urban-sized lots of less than one acre and mobilehome developments in communities with full urban services.

b. To allow accessory and non-residential uses that complement single-family neighborhoods.

c. To discourage incompatible non-residential uses in single family neighborhoods.

d. To provide housing within a neighborhood context where social interaction is facilitated by allowing compatible non-residential uses such as small convenience stores, parks and schools.

e. To encourage clustering of allowed densities where there are important open space attributes that are a community resource or where sensitive habitats exist.

Character

a. Areas with single-family dwellings at gross densities from one to seven dwelling units per acre.

b. Areas having (or programmed to receive) appropriate urban level services (see Table H).

c. Areas within an urban or village reserve lines, and within (or programmed by an individual community plan to be within) an urban service line.

d. Areas where the majority of land contains slopes less than 20% (with increased lot sizes required as slope increases) and where land with slopes less than 15% is available for development of building sites on all parcels.

e. Areas generally without fragile natural resources.

f. Areas with a landscape or viewshed of high visual quality where clustering of allowed density to less sensitive portions of a site is encouraged to be required by planning area standards.

g. Areas where residential structures generally should not exceed two stories in height or cover more than 60% of the site.

h. Areas where small-scale neighborhood commercial and service uses may be appropriate in limited areas if consistent with the LUE area plan and Land Use Ordinance location criteria.

RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY

Purpose

a. To provide areas for residential development with a wide range of densities and housing types, including single-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings and mobilehome developments.

b. To relate higher density residential development efficiently to community utilities and facilities as well as site characteristics.

c. To locate higher residential densities in close proximity to commercial areas and community services and facilities.

d. To offer a wider range of residential living environments than the detached single family residence.

e. To allow diverse non-residential activities compatible with a multi-family neighborhood.

f. To establish densities at three levels related to street capacities, distance from central business areas and public sewer service.

g. To relate allowed densities to adequate outdoor space supportive of private recreational activity.

Character

a. Areas of existing multi-family development.

b. Areas that have, or are programmed to receive, full urban services (see Table H).

c. Areas within an urban or village reserve line, and within (or programmed by an individual community plan to be within) an urban service line.

d. Areas where the majority of land contains slopes less than 20%, (with increased lot sizes required as slope increases) and where land with slopes less than 15% is available for development of building sites on all parcels.

e. Areas close to downtown or neighborhood commercial and public facilities, where urban infrastructure, circulation and neighborhood and community facilities are capable of handling high density residential development.

f. Areas where structures should generally not exceed three stories in height.

g. Multi-family density should be clustered to reserve portions of sites for usable private outdoor space and common landscaped open spaces to increase unit privacy and to visually enhance public areas.

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL

Purpose

a. To provide for office and professional development in downtown community centers and civic areas.

b. To allow for public and quasi-public uses, which are compatible with a centralized urban location or a transitional area.

c. To provide for the concentration of office uses for their mutual benefit and convenience, as well as public convenience.

d. To establish areas for the conduct of business that will minimize conflicts and adverse impacts on other land uses.

e. To encourage conversion and renovation of historic or architecturally significant buildings when located in office and professional areas.

Character

a. Transitional areas within Central Business Districts (CBD's) between residential and major commercial or public facilities, rather than components of retail or residential areas.

b. Areas set aside to support a concentration of office uses, making office and professional activities more visible and easily accessible to the public, but not located in lengthy "strip development" corridors.

c. Peripheral areas within central business districts in close proximity to commercial and public uses.

d. Areas with average slopes less than 15%, and located outside environmentally sensitive or hazardous areas such as floodways or fault zones.

e. Areas located with primary access from arterial, collector or commercial local streets, avoiding the use of local residential streets.

f. Areas where residential use may be allowed but limited to second floor or"rear half of building" locations, to reserve ground-floor frontages for business use.

COMMERCIAL RETAIL

Purpose

Central Business District (CBD) areas:

a. Provide centralized locations for stores, offices, service establishments and amusements, offering a wide range of commodities and services scaled to meet neighborhood and community general shopping needs.

b. Provide areas for a concentration of business and public facilities to encourage pedestrian circulation for public convenience and for mutual benefit.

c. To allow for limited multi-family residential uses only as secondary to commercial uses.

d. To allow community scale shopping centers if designed for street pedestrian shopping; regional shopping centers should be located within incorporated cities.

Visitor-Serving Commercial areas:

e. To provide limited areas for highway traveler services and uses associated with tourists and vacationers within urban areas on collectors or arterials or in rural areas where other commercial areas are distant.

f. To allow for commercial and compatible accessory uses related to resort or recreational activities.

Neighborhood Commercial areas:

g. To provide convenient locations for retail commercial and service establishments to meet daily shopping needs of residential areas.

Character

CBD areas:

a. Areas for retail businesses and services that supply a full range of occasional and daily community commercial needs, located within an urban service line.

b. Uses that are economically and physically compatible, mutually supportive in function and location.

c. Areas of intense retail commercial use in centralized locations serving as "drawing cards" for local and regional trade to minimize travel requirements for comparison shopping.

d. An identified Central Business District (CBD) that can support improvement districts, parking districts and other improvements to prevent "leakage" to other commercial centers outside the region they intend to serve.

e. Areas where residential uses are limited to second floor or "rear-half of building" locations, to reserve ground floor frontages for business use.

Visitor-Serving Commercial Areas:

f. Areas that serve transient and tourist needs incidental to traveling rather than local or regional residential demands, located within urban or village areas or at remote locations distant from urban or village areas where highway services already exist or would be accommodating of traveler safety in new locations.

g. Areas where the following use groups from Article 2 of the Land Use Ordinance are eligible:

Libraries and museums	Bed and breakfast facilities
Collection stations	Hotels
Eating and drinking places	Motels
Food and beverage sales	Personal services
Service stations	Recreational vehicle parks
Financial services	Pipelines and power transmission
Public safety facilities	Transit stations and terminals, and
Accessory storage	Truck stops

h. Areas that are easily accessible and apparent from regional transportation routes.

i. Areas in communities that are close to cultural, recreational and entertainment destinations or where needed to provide travel and tourism services.

j. Areas that concentrate tourist accommodations and services and preclude functionally unrelated multi-family and retail commercial uses, discouraging dispersion of motels and other highway commercial uses in other commercial or residential areas.

Neighborhood Commercial areas:

k. Limited areas where small-scale neighborhood commercial and service uses can be allowed to enable each community to attain self-sufficiency in regard to day-to-day shopping needs without disrupting the residential character of the area.

l. Locations between residential areas and downtown areas along collector or arterial streets which serve to reduce the number of shopping trips for daily needs and to encourage walking or bicycling.

m. Sites between two and five acres in size, related to the population within a one-half to one mile radius market area.

n. Areas with individual uses of generally less than 8,000 square feet of floor area to support small-scale business, with site and building design to blend with surrounding residential character.

The following use groups from Article 2 of the Land Use Ordinance are eligible to be allowed in neighborhood commercial areas, with a maximum of 8,000 square feet for any use unless otherwise noted:

Nursery specialties
Membership organization facilities
Collection stations
Small scale manufacturing
Building materials and hardware
Eating and drinking facilities (maximum 80 seats)
Food and beverage retail sales
General merchandise stores (2,000 square feet each, up to maximum of 25% of total floor area on a site)
Outdoor retail sales
Service stations
Financial services
Offices (2,000 square feet each, up to a maximum of 25% of floor area on a site)
Offices, temporary
Personal services
Public safety facilities
Repair services, consumer
Accessory storage
Temporary construction yards
Pipelines and power transmission
Transit stations and terminals
Vehicle storage

COMMERCIAL SERVICE

Purpose

a. To provide areas for commercial or industrial trade services and light manufacturing where they will not adversely affect surrounding properties.

b. To protect adjacent incompatible uses from harmful influences and prevent intrusion of conflicting uses.

c. To provide suitable locations for retail, wholesale, heavy commercial and service establishments usually located near highway traffic or where terminal facilities are convenient.

Character

a. Areas characterized by existing heavy commercial, service, and small-scale industrial uses.

b. Areas where uses generally serve occasional needs rather than day-to-day needs.

c. Areas and uses that will not create extensive, incompatible land use mixtures.

d. Areas within urban service and reserve lines, or village reserve lines.

e. Areas located to promote infill and restructuring of existing heavy and service commercial areas and discourage proliferation of scattered service uses.

f. Areas appropriate for developments using planned development concepts where unified landscaping, signing, building design, service capabilities and adequate circulation can be ensured.

g. Areas located to have access from collector and arterial streets to avoid use of residential streets for access or deliveries.

h. Areas with slopes less than 15 percent and located generally outside of flood ways, fault zones and other hazardous or environmentally sensitive areas.

INDUSTRIAL

Purpose

a. To identify areas suited to industrial activities that will not adversely affect adjacent areas of other uses.

b. To provide opportunities for the concentration of industrial uses to enable efficient use of transportation, circulation and energy facilities.

c. To protect adjacent land uses from harmful influences, as well as to prevent the intrusion of incompatible uses into industrial areas. Residences are allowed only as caretaker or accessory uses.

d. Where the Industrial category is located outside of urban or village reserve lines, it is intended to reserve appropriately located areas for industrial uses requiring large areas of land, nearby transportation or energy facilities, or related activities compatible with agricultural and other rural uses.

Character

a. Areas located within urban service and reserve lines, with full urban services available or programmed to be available within the time horizon of the applicable area plan.

b. Areas located within the periphery of urban areas where residential or long-term agricultural uses are inappropriate. Areas also appropriate for private on-site water supply and sewage disposal systems.

c. Industrial uses located outside urban services lines should be limited to activities which are not employment intensive and do not require urban services and infrastructure.

d. Areas of existing industrial uses that have been established legally prior to existing plan designations.

e. Areas with slopes less than 15 percent and located generally outside of flood ways, fault zones and other hazardous or environmentally sensitive areas.

f. Areas that are or can be adequately buffered from adjacent uses in other land use categories.

g. Areas adjacent to major transportation terminals and energy facilities.

h. Areas with access provided by collector or arterial streets and where industrial traffic is not routed through residential or other areas not compatible with industrial traffic.

i. Areas appropriate for development of large acreages using the concepts of planned development to provide industrial parks with unified landscaping, signing, building design, services, infrastructure and circulation.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Purpose

a. To identify lands and structures committed to public facilities and public agency uses that benefit the public. For proposed public facilities, where site selection has not occurred, site selection criteria are included in the chapter entitled "Combining Designations and Proposed Public Facilities," with development guidelines for establishing the uses.

b. To provide areas for development of public facilities to meet public needs.

c. To identify adequately sized facility locations that satisfy both community and regional needs relating to the population levels being served.

d. To identify facility sites based on the character of the area being served and also compatible with and supportive of the comprehensive plans of agencies within the facility service area.

Character

a. Areas with existing public or quasi-public facilities and uses, or publicly-owned lands intended for development with public facilities.

b. Areas that satisfy the specialized site location requirements of public agencies, where facilities will be visible and accessible to their users.

c. Areas without known natural or man-made hazards.

CHAPTER 7: COMBINING DESIGNATIONS & PROPOSED PUBLIC FACILITIES

A. COMBINING DESIGNATIONS

Purpose

Combining designations identify areas with characteristics that are either of public value or are hazardous to the public. The special location, terrain, man-made features, plants or animals of these areas create a need for more careful project review to protect those characteristics, or to protect public health, safety and welfare. Combining designations are established to achieve the following:

1. To relate intensity of development to the sensitivity of natural resources or other environmental features to minimize adverse environmental impacts.

2. To preserve the natural beauty and topography of the county by encouraging intensive development only where appropriate with regard to those natural features.

3. To promote preservation of the historic character of the county and to ensure that new development in historic areas is compatible with historic preservation.

4. To reduce risks to life and property through proper location and design of structures within areas subject to man-made or natural hazards, such as: airports; flooding; or geologic hazards, including active faulting, landsliding, or liquefaction.

5. To inform developers, owners and prospective buyers of property about potential flood or geologic hazards, supporting reduction of future demands for publicly funded flood control, landslide stabilization and emergency aid.

6. To enhance property values and increase economic benefits to the county by promoting the tourist trade and interest in the historic, scenic and environmental amenities of the county.

7. To recognize the importance of continuing availability of mineral and energy resources by avoiding land use decisions which may inhibit the continuing viability of energy and extractive operations and result in unnecessary or premature termination of the use of such resources.

8. To recognize the importance of protecting agricultural land for agricultural uses (including the production of food and fiber) in the application of the combining designations and the siting of development.

Summary of Designations

The LUE uses the following nine combining designations: [Amended 1996, Ord. 2776]

AR **Airport Review:** Applied to areas identified in the various county airport land use plans where proposed developments receive special review (to avoid land uses incompatible with airport operations), as well as areas within airport approach and departure patterns.

GSA **Geologic Study Area:** Applied to: areas identified in the Alquist-Priolo Geologic Hazard Zones Act as "Special Studies Zone" (Public Resources Code Section 2622); to areas within urban and village reserve lines subject to "moderately high to high" landslide risk or liquefaction potential (as identified in the Safety Element of the county general plan); and to lands outside urban reserve lines subject to high landslide risk potential (also according to the Safety Element).

FH **Flood Hazard:** Applied to flood-prone areas identified through review of available data from various federal, state, or local agencies. Also includes flood elevations of existing lakes and reservoirs.

H **Historic Site:** Applied to areas of unique historical significance.

SRA **Sensitive Resource Area:** Applied to areas having high environmental quality and special ecological or educational significance.

LCP **Local Coastal Program:** Applied to areas subject to the California Coastal Act of 1976.

EX **Energy or Extractive Area:** Applied to areas where oil, gas or mineral extraction occurs, is proposed, or where the State Geologist has identified petroleum or mineral reserves of statewide significance; and areas of existing or proposed energy-producing facilities.

EX_1 **Extractive Resource Area:** Applied to areas, including active mines, which the California Department of Conservation's Division of Mines and Geology has classified as containing or being highly likely to contain significant mineral deposits. Any such areas which are subsequently formally designated by the State as containing mineral deposits of statewide significance should be included in the EX combining designation subject to an amendment of the Land Use Element [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

NOTE: The classification information developed by the State is contained in a report titled "Special Report 162, Mineral Land Classification of Portland Cement Concrete Aggregate and Active Mines of All Other Mineral Commodities in the San Luis Obispo - Santa Barbara Production-Consumption Region, 1989." That report, together with the accompanying classification maps, are incorporated by reference herein as though set forth in full [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

TDCS **Transfer of Development Credits Sending Site:** Applied to areas where a landowner has met the criteria and standards of the Land Use Ordinance for TDC Sending Sites and has entered into an easement that qualifies under either the Open Space Easement Act or the Conservation Easement Act granted to a qualified public or private non-profit organization created for the purposes of protecting and managing resources, that restricts the development potential of the property. May also apply to community-based TDC programs, (as set forth in Chapter 6 of Framework for Planning) identified through an area plan update or by request of the area property owners. [Added 1996, Ord. 2776]

TDCR **Transfer of Development Credits Receiving Site:** Applied to areas where a landowner has met the criteria and standards of the Land Use Ordinance for TDC Receiving Sites and where a tentative map requiring the use of TDCs has been approved and recorded. May also apply to community-based TDC programs, (as set forth in Chapter 6 of Framework for Planning) identified through an area plan update or by request of the area property owners. [Added 1996, Ord. 2776]

The combining designations are applied through both the text and maps of the LUE, and are used together with the basic land use categories to guide future land use patterns. The designations are applied to the unincorporated portions of the county as detailed in the area plans.

Description of Designations

The following are descriptions and purposes of the combining designations, and general objectives to guide development in each of the combining designations (implemented through the Land Use Ordinance). These objectives are the policy basis for the detailed combining designation standards in the Land Use Ordinance. Additional requirements may be applied to a project located on a site with a combining designation by standards in the Land Use Ordinance. If standards in Article 9 (Community Planning Standards) of the Land Use Ordinance conflict with standards in other Articles of the Land Use Ordinance, Article 9 takes precedence, except in cases where additional density is granted through participation in the TDC Program. In those cases, the base density is derived from standards in Article 9, where a minimum parcel size has been established. Any density bonus shall meet the standards of the Land Use Ordinance, unless such density bonus is specifically set forth in Article 9. [Amended 1995, Ord. 2740; 1996, Ord. 2776]

AR - AIRPORT REVIEW

Purpose:

1. To implement Federal Aviation Administration regulations by allowing only those land uses which would not generate hazards or obstructions to aircraft operations in the vicinity of an airport. Hazards which must be avoided include excessive height of buildings and structures; electrical interference with radio communications; glare from night lighting which could impair the ability of flyers to distinguish airport lights from others; and glare in the eyes of flyers from reflective building surfaces.

2. To establish compatible land uses adjacent to an airport, as determined by the airport land use plans adopted by the county Airport Land Use Commissions.

3. To reflect land uses on county airport property as contained in adopted airport development plans.

4. To provide supplementary application procedures and development standards for projects located within the Airport Review area to support the establishment of new land uses which maximize compatibility with airport operations.

General Objectives: The Land Use Ordinance should provide detailed criteria for the review of projects proposed in the Airport Review area combining designation to achieve the following objectives:

1. Projects located within the Airport Review combining designation must be found compatible with the policies of the applicable adopted airport land use plan.

2. Projects within the Airport Review area must meet FAA Part 77 regulations. Projects will be reviewed for compliance with those regulations prior to issuance of any county permit.

3. Proposed new facilities located on the site of the Oceano and San Luis Obispo County airports will be approved only when compatible with the respective adopted airport development plans.

GSA - GEOLOGIC STUDY AREA

Purpose:

1. To implement the sections of the California Public Resources Code (Chapter 7.5, Division 2, known as the Alquist-Priolo Geologic Hazard Zones Act) requiring the State Geologist to delineate Special Studies Zones encompassing all potentially and recently active faults in California that constitute a potential hazard to structures from surface faulting, which require the county to exercise specified approval authority for new real estate developments and structures, and the intent of the act. It is the policy of the county that the Alquist-Priolo Geologic Hazard Zone Act, the policies and criteria established and adopted by the State Mining and Geology Board, and the Special Studies Zones maps of the State Geologist that affect the county, are part of this Land Use Element.

2. To be applied to areas of high landslide risk potential, as identified in the Safety Element, and on lands outside of urban reserve lines.

3. To be applied to areas of moderately high and high landslide risk potential (as identified in the Safety Element) within urban reserve lines.

General Objectives: The Land Use Ordinance should provide detailed criteria for the review of projects proposed in the Geologic Study Area combining designation to achieve the following objectives:

1. Structures for human occupancy are not to be constructed over an active fault area (identified by the Alquist-Priolo Geologic Hazards Zone Act Maps of the San Andreas Fault, on file in the Planning Department), without county review and approval.

2. Proposed projects in the Geologic Study Area are subject to site specific soil and geologic evaluations by a registered civil engineer or engineering geologist (as appropriate) as to the suitability of the site for development in accordance with the Land Use Ordinances.

FH - FLOOD HAZARD

Purpose:

1. To encourage land development that is designed to minimize adverse effects on drainage ways and watercourses.

2. To avoid damage to property improvements through flood inundation; destruction of natural resources; loss of water retention facilities, open space and wildlife habitats; and impairment of public and private water supplies.

3. To encourage a coordinated land and water management program which will support non-structural land uses in flood-prone areas.

4. To support location of permanent structures and other artificial obstructions to not adversely restrict water flow.

General Objectives: The Land Use Ordinance should provide detailed criteria for the review of projects proposed in the Flood Hazard combining designation to achieve the following objectives:

1. Projects in designated portions of flood areas should not be constructed, moved, or remodeled so as to result, directly or indirectly, in adverse stream channel alteration, or diminish the capacity of a designated stream course. In addition:

    a. The utility and service structures such as water and sanitation pipelines, roads, bridges, and similar facilities should include features for protection from design flood water damage.

    b. The ground floor of all commercial, industrial, and residential structures should be located at least one foot above the 100 year storm flood profile level, and should be situated to allow any necessary channel and vegetation maintenance.

    c. Special design measures may be required to protect structures from bank erosion and to insure public safety. No use should be permitted that would increase the amount of potentially damaging materials in downstream flood flows or increase flood hazards to neighboring properties.

    d. Areas of highest flood hazard should remain undeveloped in accordance with the principles of the Federal Flood Insurance Program.

2. Proposed projects should be designed with consideration for natural site features, with particular attention to the following:

    a. Substantial physical features should be preserved, and natural vegetation (including individual trees and groves) and land contours retained wherever feasible.

    b. Necessary vegetation removal and grading should occur in ways which minimize soil erosion. Seeding and mulching, or other appropriate stabilization measures should be used to protect disturbed land following construction.

    c. Topsoil should not be removed from a site except where development is actually proposed. Topsoil in these areas should be distributed on the site to provide a suitable base for landscaping after construction.

3. Projects in the Flood Hazard combining designation should be designed so they will not:

    a. Adversely increase the height or duration of flood water in or along a designated stream course beyond county engineering standards, or cause danger to life or property.

    b. Result in incompatible land uses, nor be detrimental to the protection of surface and groundwater supplies.

    c. Increase the county financial burdens through increasing the floods and overflows of water along the designated stream course.

4. Emergency work and normal maintenance and repair are exempted from the above objectives.

H - HISTORIC SITE

Purpose:

1. To enhance and perpetuate the use of structures, sites, and areas which are:

    a. Reminders of past eras, events, and persons important to local, state, or national history; or

    b. Representative of past architectural styles; or

    c. Are area landmarks in the history of architecture which are unique and irreplaceable assets to the county; or

    d. Are features which provide present and future generations with examples of the physical surroundings in which past generations lived.

2. To promote the development and maintenance of appropriate settings and environments for such structures.

3. To promote the enhancement of property values, the stabilization of neighborhoods, communities and rural areas of the county and the promotion of tourism.

4. To promote the enrichment of human life in its educational and cultural dimensions.

General Objectives: The Land Use Ordinance should provide detailed criteria for the review of projects proposed in the Historic Area combining designation to achieve the following objectives:

1. A discretionary land use permit should be required for the construction, alteration or repair of any structure with an Historic designation.

2. A project should not be approved if the project would adversely affect the character or setting of the historic area.

3. Projects within or near the Historic designation should be designed with consideration for the architectural style, design, arrangement, exterior finishes and other features characteristic of the historic site.

SRA - SENSITIVE RESOURCE AREA

Purpose:

1. Identify areas of high environmental quality, including but not limited to important geologic features, wetlands and marshlands, undeveloped coastal areas and important watersheds.

2. Enhance and maintain the amenities accruing to the public from the preservation of the scenic and environmental quality of San Luis Obispo county.

3. Provide for review of proposed alterations of the natural environment and terrain in areas of special ecological and educational significance.

4. To identify for the purposes of the Land Use Element areas defined as "Scenic and Sensitive Lands" in the county Agriculture and Open Space Element, or areas with unique or endangered resources as identified by local, state, or federal governments.

5. Provide locational and design guidelines for siting development that may occur within Sensitive Resource Areas, and encourage development to occur outside of SRA's whenever possible so as to preserve the scenic and environmental qualities of San Luis Obispo County, while retaining the ability to establish proposed land uses and minimum parcel sizes as allowed by the Land use Ordinance.

General Objectives: The Land Use Ordinance should provide detailed criteria for the review of projects proposed in the Sensitive Resource Area combining designation to achieve the following objectives:

1. Buildings and structures should be designed and located in harmonious relationships with surrounding development and the natural environment.

2. Buildings, structures and plant materials should be constructed, installed or planted to avoid unnecessary impairment of scenic views.

3. Potentially unsightly features should be located to be inconspicuous from streets, highways, public walkways and surrounding properties; or effectively screened from view.

4. Natural topography, vegetation and scenic features of the site should be retained and incorporated into proposed development.

5. Buildings and non-farm structures on agricultural property should be located to cause the least possible conflict with agricultural production by siting them away from the productive agricultural land, while still protecting to the greatest extent possible the scenic and environmental quality of the sensitive resource area.

LCP - LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM

Purpose:

1. To comply with the California Coastal Act of 1976 by identifying the boundaries of the coastal zone as defined in the Coastal Act where the Local Coastal Program is applicable.

2. To encourage the protection of the coast as a significant natural resource for the benefit of present and future generations.

General Objectives: The Land Use Ordinance should provide detailed criteria for the review of projects proposed in the Local Coastal Plan combining designation to achieve the following objectives:

1. Areas defined on the official Land Use Element maps as the Local Coastal Plan combining designation (LCP) must comply with all rules, procedures and regulations of the California Coastal Act of 1976 and its subsequent amendments.

2. As required by state law, the subsequent policies and implementing programs adopted by San Luis Obispo County and/or the State of California are a part of the LCP combining designation.

EX - ENERGY OR EXTRACTIVE AREA

Purpose:

1. To identify areas where mineral or petroleum extraction occurs, is proposed to occur, or where petroleum or mineral reserves of statewide significance exist, as defined by the State Geologist.

2. To protect existing extraction areas so that land uses incompatible with continuing extraction activities will not be developed on adjacent properties.

3. To protect existing energy production areas and regional production facilities so that incompatible uses will not be developed on adjacent properties such that the energy production facilities may become dangerous or detrimental to public health and safety.

4. To protect energy production areas from encroaching urban development or other incompatible land uses that may hinder their continued operation.

General Objectives: The Land Use Ordinance should provide detailed criteria for the review of projects proposed in the Energy or Extractive Area combining designation to achieve the following objectives:

1. Following approval of an energy or resource extraction project, the county should initiate an amendment to the Land Use Element to apply this combining designation to the property to ensure compliance with the applicable standards of the Land Use Ordinance [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

2. Extraction operations and energy production facilities should be established in areas designated as Scenic and Sensitive lands in the adopted Open Space Plan only when the need for a particular resource or facility location is determined by the Board of Supervisors to outweigh the value of the scenic and sensitive land resource. Scenic and Sensitive lands should be subject to extraction operations or energy facility development only when no feasible alternative sites are available.

3. Extraction operations and energy facilities should be provided with adequate buffering and screening from adjacent land uses.

4. Applications for proposed extraction operations should include plans for preserving the long-term productivity of the site as well as site restoration after termination of extraction operations.

5. Extraction site access routes should not create nuisances or hazards for adjacent properties.

6. Wherever possible, oil and gas drilling, production and processing should be in consolidated locations, rather than spread out over numerous sites.

7. Exploratory gas and oil wells should be subject to review procedures separate from those for development/production operations.

EX_1 - EXTRACTIVE RESOURCE AREA

Purpose

1. To identify lands which the California Department of Conservation's Division of Mines and Geology has classified as containing or being highly likely to contain significant mineral deposits [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

2. To notify landowners and the general public of the presence or high likelihood of significant mineral deposits [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

3. To emphasize the conservation and development of the mineral deposits identified by the Division of Mines and Geology, provided that a high level of environmental quality is also preserved and protected through the discretionary approval process [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

General Objectives. The Land Use Ordinance and Framework for Planning - Inland Portion, Part I of the Land Use Element should provide detailed criteria for the review of projects proposed in the Extractive Resource Area (EX_1) combining designation to achieve the following objectives [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498]:

1. Following approval of a resource extraction project, the county should initiate an amendment to the Land Use Element to apply the EX (Energy and Extractive Resource Area) combining designation to the property to ensure compliance with the applicable standards of the Land Use Ordinance [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

2. Uses which require a discretionary land use permit shall not adversely affect the continuing operation or expansion of an extraction use [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

3. Extraction operations may be established in areas designated as Scenic and Sensitive lands in the adopted Open Space Plan only when the need for a particular resource or facility location is determined by the Board of Supervisors to outweigh the value of the scenic and sensitive land resource. Scenic and Sensitive lands may be subject to extraction operations or energy facility development only when no feasible alternative sites are available [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

4. Evaluation of proposed extraction operations in areas having open space, scenic, habitat, recreational, or agricultural value shall balance those values against the need for extracting mineral resources from such sites [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

5. Extraction operations shall provide and be provided with adequate buffering and screening from adjacent land uses [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

6. Applications for proposed extraction operations shall include plans for preserving the long-term productivity of the site and other affected lands, as well as ensuring on-site and off-site restoration of affected lands. In addition, riparian corridors and other sensitive habitats shall be identified prior to the development and shall be restored and enhanced as a condition of the required land use permit [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

7. Extraction site access routes shall not create nuisances, hazards or road maintenance problems for adjacent properties [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

8. Extraction operations shall employ the best available pollution control technologies to avoid or reduce adverse environmental impacts to affected lands [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

9. The Guidelines for Land Use Category Amendments in Framework for Planning - Inland Portion, Part I of the Land Use Element shall give priority to maintaining land use categories which allow resource extraction and which result in development that is compatible with resource extraction [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].

TDCS / TDCR - TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT CREDITS - SENDING AND RECEIVING SITES

Purpose

1. Encourage the protection of areas of high environmental quality, including but not limited to important geological features, wetlands and marshlands, undeveloped coastal areas, and important watersheds.

2. Support protection of the county's agricultural industry and the resources essential to agriculture.

3. Establish settlement patterns that are consistent with capacities of existing public services and their programmed expansions, and that encourage compact urban development by directing development to vacant or underutilized infill parcels, lands next to existing development and other locations that have been identified as suitable for development.

General Objective: The Land Use Ordinance should provide detailed criteria for the designation of properties with either Transfer of Development Credit - Sending (TDCS) or Transfer of Development Credit - Receiving (TDCR) to achieve the following objectives:

1. Following recordation of an easement or other instrument that qualifies under either the Open Space Easement Act or the Conservation Easement Act granted to a qualified public or private non-profit organization created for the purposes of protecting and managing resources, that restricts the development potential of the property, the county will initiate an amendment to the LUE to apply the TDCS combining designation.

2. Notification of future landowners in the TDCS combining designation that the use of the property has been restricted in addition to the basic provisions of the Land Use Element.

3. Proposed projects in the TDCR combining designation should be designed such that adverse impacts due to the increased density are not created and there is compatibility with surrounding land uses.

4. Following recordation of a parcel or final map for a TDC receiving site, the county will initiate an amendment to the LUE to apply the TDCR combining designation.

5. Notification of neighboring landowners of a TDCR combining designation that the property could be developed at a higher density than what would otherwise be allowed by the land use category.

[Added 1996, Ord. 2776]

B. PROPOSED PUBLIC FACILITIES

Purpose

Because population growth and land development create increased demands for public services and their delivery systems, it is important to anticipate needs for the construction and expansion of new public facilities. It is appropriate for the LUE to suggest locations for new public facilities because the other policies of the LUE will be a major determinant of where new public facilities will be needed. The timing, financing, design and construction of such facilities can be subsequently accomplished through capital improvement programs. Recommended locations for proposed public facilities are shown by symbols on the combining designation maps in the LUE area plans.

Location Criteria

Symbols for the location of proposed public facilities are not site specific. When shown on area plan maps, they denote a general area rather than a particular property. A proposed facility can be established at any location within a specified distance of the symbol and still be found consistent with the Land Use Element. The various public facilities corresponding to the map symbols (and the radius within which facilities should generally be located) are shown in Table P.

TABLE P
LOCATION CRITERIA FOR PROPOSED PUBLIC FACILITIES

Proposed Facility	Location Radius
College	1 mile
Elementary School	1000 feet
Fire and Police Facilities	1000 feet
Government Facility	1000 feet
High School	1/2 mile
Jr. High School	1/2 mile
Park	1000 feet
Sewage Treatment Facilities	1/2 mile
Sewage Waste Facilities	1/2 mile
Water Treatment Facilities	1/2 mile

Site Selection

The symbols for proposed public facilities are applied over a basic land use category. As uses are developed in an area it is possible that site options available for locating new facilities could be limited or lost unless review of day-to-day development proposals considers where public facilities are proposed. For properties within the location radius of a proposed public facility, as specified in the previous table, the following process applies:

1. If a property owner initiates a development application, the Planning Department will notify the appropriate agency (i.e., school district where a proposed school symbol is shown on the map), that the application has been received.

2. The agency has 14 calendar days to respond and indicate whether they intend to purchase the property for the proposed public facility, and to immediately initiate negotiations for purchase.

3. If the agency response is negative, the application will be processed under normal Land Use Ordinance provisions, and the Planning Department notifies the Board of Supervisors that the property is being developed and that one possible location for the proposed public facility is eliminated.

4. If the agency response is positive, development application processing will be postponed for a period of 60 days to provide time for negotiations between the affected agency and the property owner. Processing will be resumed after 60 days, upon written request by the applicant or upon notification from the affected agency that negotiations were unsuccessful.

5. If all available potential sites for the proposed public facility are eliminated by this process the Planning Department will ask the Board of Supervisors to initiate an amendment to the LUE to determine a new location for the proposed public facility.

Conformity of Proposed Public Projects with the General Plan

When the acquisition or disposal of real property, or the construction of structures, is proposed by a public agency within the unincorporated area, the proposal should be evaluated for consistency with the county General Plan before the action is authorized. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65100, the Department of Planning and Building is authorized to prepare and issue conformity reports that are required by California Government Code Section 65402. The time frame for issuance of a conformity report is 40 days from submittal. The Planning Director shall place notice of completed conformity reports on the agenda of the Planning Commission at its next regular meeting. Appeals of the Department's determination may be made in accordance with the provisions of the Land Use Ordinance. Upon an appeal, the effective date of the determination shall be extended until the date of the final appeal decision [Amended 1989, Ord. 2411].

The types of actions for which conformity reports are required include the following:

1. Sale, exchange or acquisition of real property by a public agency or entity also including gifts, dedications or disposal and abandonment;

2. Government construction projects, such as schools and other public buildings, communication facilities, parks;

3. Master plans for parks, streets, government facilities;

4. Proposed public works as described in Government Code Section 65401, which should be reviewed annually as described in the Section, "The Capital Improvement Program" in Chapter 8;

5. Other planning for eventual projects that will need conformity review.

The determination of conformity is to be based on the county General Plan including the text, standards, programs and maps contained therein. Factors that may be considered in determining conformity include, but are not limited to the following:

1. The proposed project bears a reasonable relationship to pertinent policies and mapped locations of the most applicable General Plan elements, specific plan or facility master plan (such as an airport master plan).

2. The project is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Land Use Element and any other applicable General Plan element.

3. A proposed construction project is designed in conformance with the standards of the Land Use Ordinance.

4. The disposal or sale of public property will not eliminate, delay or unreasonably interfere with the opportunity to develop public sites or structures as identified in the General Plan. The proposal should be evaluated for its possible use as a public facility, or for its exchange or sale and subsequent purchase of a better site within the community.

The following "development guidelines," the text of Chapter 6 as well as the combining designation maps of the applicable LUE area plan, will be used to determine the need for retaining public property. The development guidelines have precedence over identified public facility locations because their scope is broad in terms of ultimate community needs, particularly where specific facility sites have not yet been identified.

Development Guidelines

The following development guidelines address specific types of public facilities. The actual design of a facility will be determined by specific building programs and site constraints, and may necessarily vary from these general guidelines. Public facilities not discussed will have development guidelines defined through special studies in conjunction with capital improvement programs. Guidelines for solid waste disposal facilities are in the adopted county Solid Waste Management Plan.

Fire Protection and Rescue Facilities
The purpose of fire and rescue services is to save lives, limit injuries, suppress and prevent fires and to provide specialized rescue services. These guidelines mainly address the needs of base facilities in urban settings, though the location and response time criteria are applicable countywide.

Location: Preference should be given to locating fire stations near areas of high fire incidence and where the potential for life and property risk is high.

Access: Urban fire stations should be located on collectors and/or arterials, but should avoid congested areas or locations where terrain features or unnecessary detours hinder rapid response.

Appropriate response time:
Urban areas - 4-6 minutes
Suburban areas - 6-7 minutes
Rural areas - 10 minutes

Site Standards: 20,000 square feet minimum, with one acre being the recommended size. Corner lots are more desirable to allow front and rear equipment entrances. Visual access from the major exit point is crucial to avoid conflicts with other vehicles. Future expansion of the facility should be planned for at the time of site acquisition.

Compatibility: Fire stations are generally acceptable in all land use categories but their visual impact on adjoining properties should be minimized through attractive landscaping, particularly in residential areas. Locations adjacent to parks or service center facilities are desirable, as well as commercial or industrial locations.

Police Service Facilities

The provision of police or public safety services is a personalized and emergency-related endeavor, primarily in crime, traffic safety, and public service situations.

Locations: Police service facilities should be located near major thoroughfares since response time is critical.

Site Standards: Dependent upon the function of the facility and proposed type of operation. Future expansion should be planned for at the time of site acquisition.

Branch Libraries

The provision of library services becomes increasingly important as the county grows. As the range of library services are broadened to include media center and information bank functions, libraries will assume far greater importance.

Location: Libraries should be located within urban or village areas and located in areas of high accessibility and visibility. They should be located on an arterial and/or collector road. Isolated locations should be avoided.

Library Size Standards (Service Area):

10,000 pop. or less: .7-.8 sq. ft./capita
10,000 - 50,000: .6-.65 sq. ft./capita
50,000 +: .5-.6 sq. ft./capita

Site Objectives: The construction of new library buildings should occur on sites with a minimum area of 20,000 sq. ft., with one acre recommended. Future facility expansions should be planned at the time of site acquisition. Regional libraries require special studies for standards.

Surrounding Characteristics: Acceptable maximum interior noise levels should be 45 Leq,dB (as determined for a typical worst-case hour during periods of use). Measurement shall be as set forth in the Noise Element of the general plan. [Amended 1995, Ord. 2740]

Schools and Educational Facilities

The provision of educational services is one of the most important local government services and educational facilities are serving increasingly as neighborhood and community focal points for a multitude of community activities for all age groups. The processes of site selection and design for schools should include consideration of the criteria in Table Q.

Public Parks and Recreation Areas
Parklands and recreation areas are designed to serve the permanent residents of the county, as well as the numerous tourists visiting the area. Public parks should be convenient and accessible as prominent land uses throughout the county and particularly within urban areas [Amended 1990, Ord. 2488].

TABLE Q
SCHOOLSITE SELECTION CRITERIA

Desired Enrollment		Desirable Site Size	Minimum Street Frontage	Maximum Noise Acceptable (1)	Building Area
E	400-700	10-15 acres	Collector	45 Leq, dB	55 sq. ft. per pupil
JHS	800-1000	20-30 acres	Collector	45 Leq, dB	75 sq. ft. per pupil
HS	2200 max.	40-50	Collector	45 Leq, dB	74-85 sq. ft. per pupil
S	per Land Use Ordinance				

KEY:
E = Elementary School
JHS = Junior High/Middle School
HS = High School
C = College/University
S = Specialized Institution

NOTES:
1. As determined for a typical worst-case hour during periods of use - Noise measurements shall be as set forth in the Noise Element of the general plan.

[Amended 1995, Ord. 2740]

All existing public and private parks and recreational areas should be retained unless a suitable substitute can be provided. Wherever possible, neighborhood parks and playgrounds should be built in conjunction with public schools [Amended 1990, Ord. 2488].

The county adopted a Parks and Recreation Master Plan on August 2, 1988, which contains detailed data, goals and policies for general park development. The Land Use Element utilizes the following policies from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for parkland and recreation planning and for land dedications with new subdivisions [Amended 1990, Ord. 2488]

Countywide Park System Goal, Objectives and Policies

Goal: To provide an adequate supply of local and regional parks to all San Luis Obispo County residents

Objective 1: To provide an adequate supply and equitable geographic distribution of regional and local-serving parks based on the existing and projected distribution of the county's population.

Objective 2: To use the park and recreation and open space standards recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), as more fully set forth below, as a goal for establishing the need for additional parklands and facilities.

The following policies are related to public parks and recreation facilities and will allow the county to meet the above goal and objectives [Amended 1990, Ord. 2488]:

General County Park Policies

1. The County Parks and Recreation Master Plan should be used as a guide for developing additional park facilities.

2. Any implementation of the County Parks and Recreation Master Plan shall be subject to the recognition of the economic, aesthetic and historical benefits of agricultural land use and shall not be applied to the detriment of such use.

3. The following parkland standards shall be used to evaluate the existing need for parkland and accommodate future population growth: community parks - 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents of the unincorporated portion of the county; neighborhood parks - 1.0 acres per 1,000 residents of the unincorporated portion of the county; regional parks - 20 acres per 1,000 residents. These calculations will exclude populations at Atascadero State Hospital, the California Men's Colony, the California Youth Authority, and the County Jail. A portion of state parklands may be included to meet the standard for regional parks.

4. The Land Use Element identifies existing and planned parks owned by federal, state, county, or local agencies; locations proposed for future county parks are schematic, and may be located on any suitable lands in the general vicinity.

5. Parklands and recreational facilities may be acquired by the county by purchase negotiations, gifts, fees, and through conditions placed on land use permits and subdivisions; the scope of such conditions shall bear a reasonable relationship to the nature and extent of such approvals.

   As authorized by California Government Code Section 66477 (known as the Quimby Act), the county should enact an ordinance to require the dedication of land and/or payment of fees in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for park and recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a tentative tract or parcel map for residential subdivisions.

6. The county should cooperate with cities and other government entities to provide regional and community parks for existing and future residents.

7. Development of recreational opportunities by the private sector shall be encouraged.

[Amended 1990, Ord. 2488]

Regional Parks Policies

1. The primary purpose of regional parks shall be to serve county residents.

2. Community and/or neighborhood-serving recreation facilities may be provided in regional parks if needed.

[Amended 1990, Ord. 2488]

Community and Neighborhood Parks Policies

1. The primary purpose of community and neighborhood parks shall be to serve the local residents of the area.

2. Park development shall be encouraged adjacent to elementary, junior and high schools to benefit from shared use of land and facilities. A joint use program with local school districts should be pursued, where feasible, to develop necessary agreements for cost sharing arrangements for parks near schools and to develop the necessay agreements to cover park maintenance and operation.

[Amended 1990, Ord. 2488]

Parkland Definitions. The following definitions are utilized by the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and by this Land Use Element for the various types of parklands found in San Luis Obispo County. Table R describes standards for the classification of park facilities based on these definitions, which reflect the recommendations of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). These standards should be applied as guidelines since the NRPA recommends that, "... without expensive and extensive long-term research, there is no way to apply the standards in the same manner in all locations. The uniqueness of every village, town, city and county - with their differing socioeconomic, climatic, geographic and cultural characteristics - makes it almost impossible, and undesirable, to apply all of the standards in every community." Using these standards as a guide, new parks which may not necessarily meet the recommended park size may still be considered as valuable opportunities in working toward the overall goal of meeting park needs.

Federal Recreation Areas and State Parks: Provide the broad range of recreation opportunities described for regional parks (below), but are intended to serve national and statewide populations. Usage data permit a breakdown of the roles performed by federal and state facilities in San Luis Obispo County. No standard or criteria are applicable in Table R .

Regional Parks: Provide a variety of passive and active recreation such as picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, camping, bicycling, and trail use. These facilities should be within a one-hour drive from urban areas. Park size ranges from 200 acres to over 1,000 acres. A recommended standard is 20 acres per 1,000 persons. Some existing regional county parks, such as Biddle Park, are smaller than 200 acres.

Community Parks: Are large enough (25+ acres) to serve all ages with a range of facilities: fields, courts, large play areas, group picnic areas, etc. Located reasonably close to population centers with a one to two-mile service radius. Joint use with schools is recommended where feasible. The recommended standard is 5.0 acres per 1,000 persons. Many existing community county parks are smaller than 25 acres.

Neighborhood Parks: Consist of 5 to 25 acres within a one-half- mile walking radius of the neighborhood served. Parks are geared toward elementary school age children with a split between "park" (passive use such as picnicking) and "play" areas (swings, toddler, open turf multi-use area). Parks should be sited adjacent to schools for joint use programs. The recommended standard is 1 acre per 1,000 persons. Most existing neighborhood county parks are smaller than 10 acres.

Mini-Parks (Playlot, Vest Pocket Park, etc.): Refer to small areas used for open space or recreation by all age groups, depending on the needs of the neighborhood. They may include play apparatus, paved areas, sandpits, wading pools, or they may simply be planted in grass. Their size usually ranges from 2,500 square feet to 5 acres. The effective service radius varies, although is rarely more than the walking range of a pre-school child or about one-eighth of a mile.

Miscellaneous: These facilities are not specifically defined but are equally valuable to the county as bridle trails, jogging trails, linear parks and medians, greenbelts, and rights-of-way.

Park Site Selection. Site selection for public parks for individual park acquisitions or as part of the Land Use Element update program should utilize the criteria in Table R. [Amended 1990, Ord. 2488]

TABLE R
PARK SITE SELECTION STANDARDS

Type of Park	Acres/1000 People	Size Range (Acres)	Radius of Service Area	Street	Population Served
Mini-Park	.5	.18-5	.12-.25 mile	local/coll	500 to 2,500
Neighborhood	1.0	5-25	25-.5 mile	local/coll	2,500 to 5,000
Community	5.0	25+	1-2 miles	coll/art	5,000+
Regional	15-20	200+	within 1 hour driving time	coll/art	30,000+
SOURCE: Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines; National park and Recreation Association, 1983.					

[Amended 1990, Ord. 2488].

Water Supply Facilities
An adequate water supply system is a vital necessity to nearly every land use. Demand for water is generated by: urban and suburban uses; irrigated agriculture; recreational uses, including fish and wildlife; power plant cooling and energy production; environmental enhancement; water quality control and groundwater recharge; flood control; and navigation. County plans for water supply facility development are contained in the Master Water and Sewerage Element of the General Plan. Water storage facilities are addressed in the Land Use Ordinance. Water service should not be extended beyond urban services lines where such extension would impair the adequacy of service within the USL, or where such extensions have not been programmed or are not in conformity with the general plan.

Urban and suburban uses with densities of 1 dwelling unit per 2-1/2 acres or greater should be served by a community water system. Residential rural and agricultural uses should rely upon on-site wells.

In rural areas outside the urban reserve line that are experiencing long-term physical hardship due to local groundwater shortages, it may become appropriate to establish an urban level community service system for water service only. Prior to establishment of community water service within a rural area, Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance and the applicable area plan should be amended to provide the boundaries, policies and standards that would apply to a specific hardship area and its community water system. [Added 1993, Ord. 2614]

Community Sewerage and Wastewater Facilities
Wastewater treatment facilities are important to maintain domestic water quality and to protect public health and safety. Sewer service should not be extended beyond urban service lines where such extension would impair the adequacy of service within the USL or where such extension would not be in conformity with the general plan.

Facilities should be located and designed so as to minimize conflicts with surrounding uses. Heavily populated areas should be avoided in site selection.

CHAPTER 8: IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION

A. IMPLEMENTATION

The Land Use Element is organized and mapped to be used with greater precision in evaluating land use proposals and decisions than has been possible with former land use plans. Because it covers individual areas in detail, the Land Use Element (LUE) must have the legal support of implementing ordinances and procedures if the adopted policies are to provide meaningful guidance for land development. It is implemented by the Land Use Ordinance, the agricultural and open space preserve programs, the Resource Management System (described in Chapter 3), and the county capital improvement program.

Relationship of the LUE to The Land Use Ordinance

The principal means for applying Land Use Element policies to land development is the Land Use Ordinance. The Land Use Ordinance incorporates the LUE land use categories, combining designations, and the official maps. It contains the procedures for various permit processes for the review and approval of proposed land uses and divisions, including provisions for public review of such decisions and opportunities for appeal. It requires that all new or altered uses be consistent with the Land Use Element, eliminating the need for the traditional system of separate zoning maps. This policy enables general plan consistency to be readily determined.

Together, the Land Use Element and Land Use Ordinance serve the functions of land use plan and zoning ordinance. The Land Use Element and Land Use Ordinance identify where specific uses can be established. The Land Use Ordinance also determines how such uses may be planned and developed.

To ensure that countywide land use regulations are responsive to conditions within individual communities, the planning area standards of Article 9 (Community Planning Standards) of the Land Use Ordinance take precedence over the other standards of the Land Use Ordinance where standards differ.

In replacing the former zoning ordinance, the Land Use Ordinance must satisfy the provisions of Government Code Section 65860 which require that zoning ordinances be consistent with the adopted general plan. The state statute provides further that consistency is achieved only if:

1. The county has officially adopted a general plan, and

2. The various land uses authorized by the ordinance are compatible with the objectives, policies, general land uses and programs specified in the general plan.

The requirements for internal regulatory and policy consistency are met by the Land Use Ordinance and Land Use Element because the ordinance allows only those land uses that are entirely consistent with the Land Use Element's official maps.

A proposed land use or land division is consistent with the Land Use Element when:

1. The proposed use or division is allowed in the land use category in which the site for the proposed use is located, as shown on the official maps (Part III of the Land Use Element); and

2. The proposed division satisfies the criteria and standards set forth in the Land Use Ordinance for a Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) project, which may allow for a higher density than what would normally be allowed in a given land use category or by a standard that limits parcel sizes. [Added 1996, Ord. 2776]

These criteria are used in Land Use Ordinance procedures to determine if development projects are consistent with the Land Use Element. The Land Use Ordinance defines how the criteria are applied, and it explains how such determinations may be appealed. A proposed use or division must also satisfy any standards of the Land Use Ordinance. These criteria are more specific to the type of use or to its function on a performance basis. Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance contains standards that relate more to the location characteristics of a proposed use.

Agricultural Preserves

Preservation of agricultural, recreational and open space lands through agricultural preserve contracts between the county and property owners is a technique encouraged by the state for implementing the general plan. Agricultural preserve contracts are executed through procedures enabled by the California Land Conservation Act of 1965. A contract may be entered into for property with agricultural, recreational and open space uses in return for decreased property taxes. The county Agricultural Preserve Rules of Procedure require certain minimum parcel sizes and land use restrictions applicable to agricultural preserve lands under their respective contracts.

Though most lands in the Agriculture category may be eligible for the agricultural preserve program, other categories may also include land that may be eligible for agricultural preserve. Since other areas are generally not as productive as land in the Agriculture category, establishment of future agricultural preserves will depend on whether each case satisfies current county agricultural preserve guidelines. When not already included in the Agriculture land use category, all lands for which agricultural preserves are approved will be placed in the Agriculture category by the county amending the Land Use Element.

Open Space Preservation

While the county encourages agriculturally productive lands in any land use category to be entered in the agricultural preserve program, other non-productive open space lands may also be worthy of preservation. Such lands are identified by the Agriculture and Open Space Element, the area plans of the Land Use Element and at the time of project review for subdivisions and development. Both extensive areas and small, environmentally sensitive portions of properties may be designated for preservation as natural resource areas, recreation land, scenic viewsheds, water management or natural hazard land.

There are several alternative methods for open space preservation, such as easements, agreements, gifts, transfer of development rights (TDR's) and eminent domain, available as outlined in the open space implementation program in the Rules of Procedure. That program is administered in a manner similar to the agricultural preserve program, but with different guidelines. Purchase of development rights and outright property acquisition are also possible open space preserve alternatives. Although the power of eminent domain is an option available to the county under law, it should be used very cautiously and only in circumstances where the rights of the individual property owner have been carefully considered and where the county has determined that a public interest will be served to acquire the property. The circumstances under which any of the above open space preservation methods might be used must be carefully evaluated, and all efforts to preserve open space should work to balance public benefit with the interests of property owners and the requirements of law.

Open Space Zoning

State law (Government Code Section 65910) requires that "...every city and county shall prepare and adopt an open-space zoning ordinance consistent with the local open space plan...." Open space zoning provides an "enforceable restriction" to enable implementation of voluntary preserve contracts. The Agriculture, Rural Lands, Recreation and Open Space land use categories and the Flood Hazard and Sensitive Resource area combining designations fulfill the open space zoning requirements of the Government Code.

The Agriculture land use category substitutes for the former agricultural zoning districts by including all lands previously zoned A-3 or which are subject to agricultural preserve contract. In addition to being part of the Land Use Element, the adoption of the land use categories by the Land Use Ordinance establishes the land use categories as effective use districts under the Land Use Ordinance and provides the necessary basis for compliance with state requirements for open space zoning.

The Capital Improvement Program

The development of public facilities and acquisition of property should be consistent with the general plan. The full potential of a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) can be most effectively realized if the program is based upon the long-range perspective of community needs identified in the general plan. The county's capital improvement program is the bridge between the general plan and the development of public facilities.

The CIP should be annually reviewed by the Planning and Building Department for conformity with the general plan as required by Section 65401 of the Government Code. This section requires departments that prepare capital programs and construct capital projects to submit their proposed capital projects annually for inclusion in the capital improvement program report. Likewise, this section also requires, for purposes of coordination, any governmental entity in the county, special district, school district or others to file their proposed capital programs annually with the county planning agency for conformity review. Another section of the Government Code (65403) encourages special districts (school districts and others) to prepare a five-year plan for their capital improvement programs.

The CIP annual review should be coordinated with the annual review of the general plan to allow for continuing responsiveness to changes in community conditions, and to determine the ability of the county to finance new facilities. Refer to the section on annual review of the general plan for that discussion.

The general plan itself contains recommendations for the timing or sequencing of various projects. Because major projects are usually planned, funded and constructed over several years, a multiple year CIP should be developed, the first year of which should be reviewed for general plan conformity.

Status of Existing Plans

All previously adopted general plans for the unincorporated communities of the county have been repealed with the adoption of the LUE, and individual community plans are now contained within Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance and the area plans of the Land Use Element. Countywide elements, however, (the Agriculture and Open Space Plan, Safety Element, etc.) remain in effect, and with the Land Use Element comprise the total San Luis Obispo County General Plan.

The multiple-element nature of the general plan creates special problems with respect to the requirements of state planning law. In the same way that zoning regulations must be consistent with the general plan, the various general plan elements must be consistent with each other. That principle is reinforced by specific statutory requirements. Consistency with the Open Space Plan has been achieved by designing the land use categories in accord with county open space policies, and by applying land use categories in patterns that do not conflict with the Open Space Plan.

Whenever an amendment is proposed to any element of the county general plan, all other elements must be reviewed to determine whether they must also be amended. All elements requiring amendment will be considered concurrently to maintain continuing consistency between the various elements of the general plan.

City General Plans

Land use plans for the urban reserve area around the incorporated cities are shown within the Land Use Element to indicate the continuity in proposed land uses and circulation patterns surrounding city boundaries. While the county has no land use authority over lands within a city, the designations of the LUE outside the city limits and inside the urban reserve line are policies for interim county actions before city annexation. Individual city general plans and zoning regulations must be consulted to determine the regulations affecting development of private land within an incorporated city.

When any city general plans are amended, changes will be reviewed by the county to evaluate their effects, if any, on the county general plan. If county policies are affected, the Land Use Element will be brought to public hearing at the next available general plan amendment hearing date to consider county adoption of city plan changes. As stated in the goals for the Land Use Element in Chapter 1, it is important that the county and cities work continuously together toward reconciliation of divergent land use policies and achieving common land use goals.

Specific Plans and Other "Overlay" Plans

Several specific plans (defined by Government Code Sections 65450 et. seq.) for large residential developments have been included by reference in Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance. The LUE maps show land uses in accordance with the adopted plans (except where the land uses shown in certain plans have been amended in conjunction with adoption of the LUE), and Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance include some applicable standards. However, the specific plans contain more detailed information and requirements applicable to their respective projects beyond the scope of the LUE and the Land Use Ordinance. Consequently, those plans are to be used with the Land Use Element and Land Use Ordinance in reviewing projects proposed within specific plan boundaries to determine if they are consistent with the Land Use Element.

Special Purpose Plans

Other plans that relate closely to the Land Use Element include special purpose documents such as the various county airport land use plans, the Air Quality Maintenance Plan and the Local Agency Formation Commission spheres of influence. While the LUE incorporates and refines some of the recommendations and policies of those documents, they also contain procedures, standards and basic information that is beyond the scope of the Land Use Element. As a result, those plans must be used in conjunction with the LUE and LUO in evaluating project proposals which come under their jurisdiction. In order to maintain a comprehensive, coordinated approach to county planning, the county general plan will be considered for amendment whenever one of those plans is amended, or a new "overlay" plan is adopted.

B. ADMINISTRATION

Official Maps

The Official Land Use Maps of San Luis Obispo County constitute Part III of the Land Use Element. They illustrate the land use categories and combining designations that are applied to specific parcels throughout the county. The official maps are available for review or purchase from the county Department of Planning and Building. While approximating the official maps as closely as possible given their smaller size, the maps in the LUE area plans are for preliminary reference only. The official maps themselves must be reviewed to determine the land use designations that apply to a particular parcel.

Interpretation of the Land Use Element

In any case where uncertainty exists regarding the location of any Land Use category or other symbols or designations on the official maps, or any uncertainty concerns the definition of a proposed use of land, refer to the Land Use Ordinance, Chapter 22.02, Rules of Interpretation.

Coordination of Land Use Decisions with other Agencies

The Land Use Element applies to all agencies and departments of the county where their actions affect the use of land, and will be used in conformity reports on acquisition or disposal of public property (as required by Government Code Section 65402). The county, the cities, special districts, state and federal agencies have the responsibility to coordinate land use planning.

Incorporated Cities
It is the policy of the county that the incorporated cities and the county should:

1. Coordinate land use planning.

2. Make available to each other for review and comment proposed changes in their general plans, zoning and land use applications that may affect property adjacent to their boundaries.

3. Share population, housing and land use statistics and resource capacity data.

4. Share information on proposed public works recommended for planning, initiation or construction during the ensuing fiscal year that affect other areas or have a possible effect on land use plans (e.g., park expansions, water capability for future urban expansion, etc.) in accordance with the provisions of the capital improvement program .

Special Districts and School Districts
It is the policy of the county that special districts and school districts within the county should:

1. Annually provide the Department of Planning and Building with a report on current service capabilities, including existing levels of service and present or proposed service capacities, in accordance with the requirements of the Resource Management System.

2. Annually provide the Department of Planning and Building with a list of proposed public works recommended for planning, initiation or construction during the ensuing fiscal year, in accordance with the requirements of Government Code Section 65401.

3. Submit proposed construction projects to the Department of Planning and Building for review, comment and findings on their conformity with the county general plan.

State and Federal Agencies

It is the policy of the county that state and federal agencies conducting land use planning activities or administering projects within the county have the responsibility to:

1. Coordinate land use planning with the county.

2. Provide technical assistance to the county planning process as necessary or as requested.

3. Notify the Board of Supervisors of actions or programs that may affect San Luis Obispo County.

4. Submit to the county annually any proposed public works projects or proposed property acquisitions within the county for review and comment and findings on the conformity of proposed projects and acquisitions with the county general plan.

Annual Review of the General Plan

An annual review of the general plan is a valuable way to check the status of needed programs and policies in the Land Use Element and other elements and to promote an on-going process of implementation. This objective is also mandated by Government Code Section 65400(b), which requires the planning agency to provide an annual report to the legislative body on the status of the general plan and progress in its implementation.

The annual review of the general plan should occur before the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is reviewed each year, so that decisions to implement general plan programs will be addressed in the CIP and integrated into the budget process. The following subjects shall be presented to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for review:

1. Progress report on the scheduled implementation of the adopted General Plan Elements, reviewing the status of previously scheduled programs and planned new programs including Land Use Element programs that are contained in the area plans.

2. Proposals for scheduling continued and new implementation programs in the Capital Improvement program and the county budget, to maintain a timely and effective implementation schedule.

3. Proposals to initiate amendments to the general plan and/or the Land Use Ordinance if information presented demonstrates needs for policy changes.

The annual review process is to be used by county departments and made available to other agencies, to consider implementing general plan programs within their Capital Improvement Programs and budget process.

Update of the Land Use Element

The Land Use Element should be updated periodically consistent with state law so that area plans can be comprehensively reviewed. The purposes of the Land Use Element update are to review new information or conditions that affect land use policy and to review the effectiveness of policies in implementing plan goals.

Several steps are involved in updating Framework for Planning and each area plan as indicated in Appendix E located at the end of this document.

Public Participation During the General Plan Update Process.

Early in the update process, the county encourages individuals, groups, organizations, advisory committees and public agencies to comment on issues pertinent to the plan update. This process is encouraged through each step of the update process. It is especially important that community advisory committees, representing the spectrum of groups within their community, participate throughout the plan update proces to help define issues, discuss desired community direction, and provide input for overall plan development.

Public comments will likely result in proposed changes in the plan. However, these comments are not considered to be amendments, nor are they subject to the amendment process described here. As comments are received and responded to, the planning director will determine if an actual amendment is being requested. Examples of comments that would not be processed as formal plan amendments might include written or verbal suggestions, identification of minor errors, updated figures and statistics, and generalized areas where the plan can be improved. These changes usually result in changes that benefit the larger community and area, rather than an individual property owner.

Amending the Land Use Element

State law (Government Code Section 65358) provides that no mandatory element of a general plan may be amended more than four times per year. At those times, however, the Planning Commission may consider any number of proposals for individual changes to the LUE or other general plan elements. Hearings on proposed changes must receive public notice and be conducted as required by the Government Code. The limitation of four times per year does not apply to amendments requested and necessary for residential projects where at least 25 percent of the proposed units will be occupied by or available to persons and families of low or moderate income (as defined in Section 50093 of the Health and Safety Code).

The LUE may be amended by changing land use categories and combining designations, programs, standards, or any other provision or policy of the plan. These are processed either as separate general plan amendment applications, or are evaluated as property owner requests for changes submitted during an area plan update. Amendments may be initiated by any individual or group, by the Planning Director, Planning Commission, or the Board of Supervisors.

Processing of Amendments

General plan amendments may be proposed by filing an application with the Department of Planning and Building. An application will be accepted for processing once it is found to be complete, except for the time period between 90 days before the update of an LUE area plan is started, and 30 days before the Draft Plan is scheduled to be released for public review. However, subject to Board of Supervisors approval, acceptance of applications for individual properties processing could be resumed two years after the start of an LUE area plan update if the plan update has not been completed. This provision for resumption of non-update amendment processing after two years would also apply to area plan updates that have already exceeded the 24 month processing time.

Consideration of Individual Property Owner Requests for Changes During a General Plan Update.

Timing. During the time period between 90 days before a General Plan Update is scheduled to start and 45 days before the draft plan is scheduled to be released for public review, an individual property owner request may be considered within the overall update procedure and corresponding time schedule. For example, an application filed on September 15th will not be accepted for separate processing if an update covering the proposed site has begun or is scheduled to begin the following December 15th (within 90 days). This requirement also applies to the situation where the county has scheduled a comprehensive update to other parts of the Land Use Element, Framework for Planning or to the Land Use Ordinance. The determination of when a separate amendment may be made, or when it must be included with an update as a property request for changes, is made by the planning director. However, the Board of Supervisors can consider accepting applications for separate processing if the applicable area plan update is not completed within two years after it is started or if the application qualifies for one of the following exceptions.

In some instances, individual property owner requests may need to be processed separately from an area plan update if the following circumstances apply to the requested change or proposal: 1) If the request is outside the orignal scope of work or budget, 2) If the request would adversely affect the completion times already established, and 3) If the request would be considered a "major" project.

Examples of individual property owner requests that are to be considered as part of the update process include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Individual property owner requests that adjust or intensify development potential significantly by proposing changes to text or map designations.

2. Amendments necessary to allow major development projects, such as subdivisions, Conditional Use Permit, and specific plans.

3. Major changes proposed to county policy, or where significant issues or public controversy are likely to occur. This category of requested change may be referred by the Board of Supervisors to an update <u>at any</u> time in advance of the next scheduled update.

Examples of individual property owner requests that may not be considered as part of the update process include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. When an area plan update by itself would not not result in significant impacts sufficient to require preparation of an EIR, any citizen requests that would result in significant impacts and the preparation of an EIR, shall be processed separately from the update.

"Window" for considering property requests for changes during an update. Property owner requests for changes shall be considered as part of an update during a processing "window" that begins 90 days prior to starting the update, and extends to within 45 days prior to the date that the planning director determines that the draft updated plan is ready for submittal for environmental review. After that date, or two years after the plan update is started if it has not been completed sooner, and the Board of Supervisors so authorizes, a separate amendment application may be made and processed.

Members of the public may recommend changes to the LUE land use categories, ~~standards~~, or text as part of the area plan update process by either submitting written recommendations to the Department of Planning and Building prior to the public hearings on the draft plan or by presenting verbal or written comments at scheduled public hearings and workshops, during the area plan update process.

As part of the authorization process, the Board of Supervisors may make exceptions to the above-described limitation on general plan amendment applications such that amendments could be processed during the update "window" under the following circumstances:

1. To correct obsolete references, statistics, or errors in text or maps.

2. To accommodate the development or expansion of a public facility, public works project, or major energy facility, or to change the land use category of a site which is being transferred between public and private ownership.

3. For proposed housing developments where at least 50% of the units will be affordable by low and moderate income households as defined by Section 50093 of the California Health and Safety Code.

4. To satisfy an immediate community need as determined by the Board of Supervisors.

5. For proposed projects that would offer a significant public recreation, economic, or environmental benefit, as determined by the Board of Supervisors.

6. For proposed projects that would involve the preparation of an environmental impact report that would provide important information that will assist the county in the LUE area plan update process, as determined by the Board of Supervisors.

7. Property owner requests for changes to text or map designations that are minor adjustments which do not significantly intensify development potential or contribute to major cumulative impacts, as determined by the Board of Supervisors.

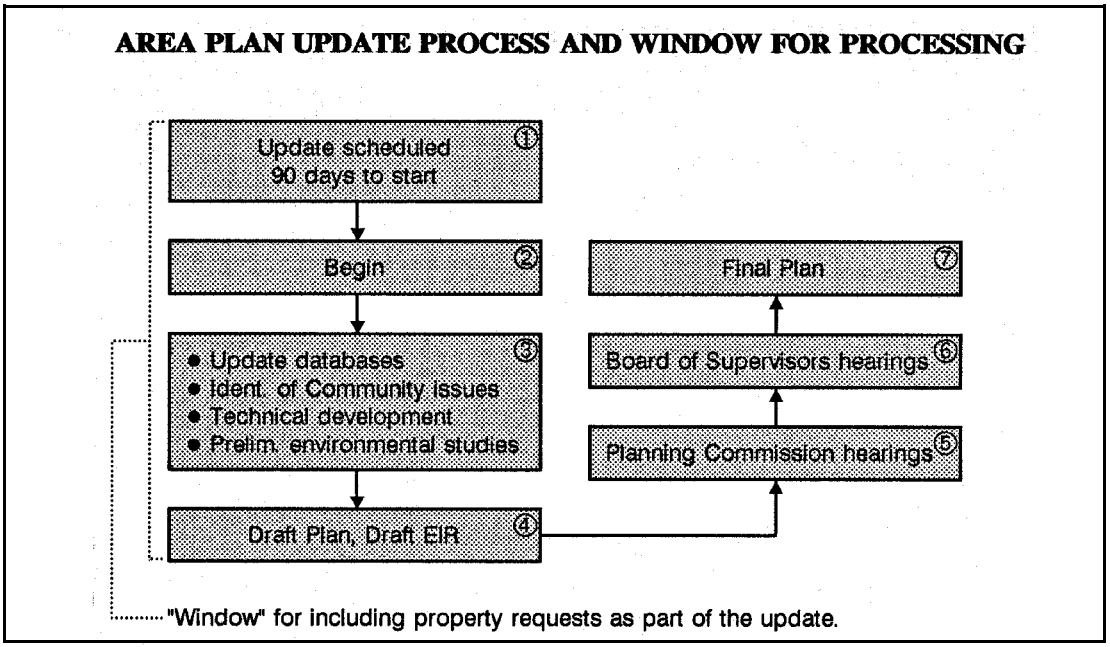


Figure 8-1: Area Plan Update Process, and Window for Processing

Processing Steps

A listing of steps followed by staff when processing individual property owner requests during a general plan update, and for general plan amendments processed normally apart from update are found in Appendices E and F located in the back of this document.

Environmental Impact Determinations

Procedures are contained in the Land Use Ordinance and Real Property Division Ordinance by which applications for land use permits and land divisions are reviewed. They specifically require a review of potential impacts of proposed projects in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Determinations of environmental impacts are for all discretionary projects as defined by CEQA, including land use permits, land divisions and general plan amendments, as well as specific plans and county facility master plans.

Particular attention to proposed land divisions is necessary because the Subdivision Map Act no longer allows conditions of approval to require that notes be placed on an approved final or parcel map. Such conditions have often been the means to require mitigation of environmental impacts and still approve a proposed subdivision. When a Conditional Use Permit or Minor Use Permit is required with a proposed subdivision, the land use permit enables the use of conditions of approval that will apply separately after map recordation.

In cases where there is no Conditional Use Permit or Minor Use Permit required for a subdivision, a substitute procedure may be used. If the initial study conducted for the proposed subdivision identifies potentially significant effects, but the applicant proposes revisions to the project or agrees through a developer's statement signed by the applicant to revisions in the project that would avoid or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, a negative declaration may then be issued for the proposed subdivision.

The applicant may be required by conditions of approval of the tentative subdivision map to enter into an agreement on behalf of himself and his successors in interest prior to recordation of the parcel or final map or to record an additional map sheet with the final map or parcel map. The agreement or additional map sheet may require the applicant to carry out and perform certain duties and obligations after map recordation including mitigation measures that may have been identified in the initial study and agreed to in a developer's statement or may have been identified in an environmental impact report prepared for the project. Such agreements and or additional map sheets may address, but not be limited to, building site designations, archaeological constraints, tree removal, landscaping, or other measures necessary to successfully mitigate the impacts of the land division.

[Amended 1993, Ord. 2634]

APPENDIX

A. Countywide Population Projections

B. Estimated Build-out Capacity of the Land Use Element, Including Incorporated Cities and Projected Build-out Dates

C. Total Agricultural Valuations

D. Summary of Resource Management System Levels of Severity

E. Update of the Land Use Element Area Plans

F. Processing Individual Property Requests for Changes During a General Plan Update Process

Table A: San Luis Obispo County Population Projections, September 2001							
	Population in Households (Population in group quarters not included)						
PLANNING AREA or Community	**2000**	**2005**	**2010**	**2015**	**2020**	**2025**	**2030**
ADELAIDA	3,114	3,547	4,041	4,603	5,244	5,974	6,805
EL POMAR/ESTRELLA	7,294	8,085	8,962	9,934	11,011	12,205	13,528
ESTERO	28,626	29,505	31,400	33,429	35,601	37,929	40,423
Morro Bay	**10,212**	10,653	11,114	11,594	12,095	12,618	13,163
Cayucos	2,926	3,075	3,232	3,397	3,570	3,752	3,943
Los Osos	14,277	14,420	15,534	16,735	18,028	19,421	20,922
Estero (Rural)	1,211	1,357	1,520	1,703	1,908	2,138	2,395
HUASNA-LOPEZ	821	941	1,079	1,237	1,418	1,626	1,864
LAS PILITAS	1,349	1,395	1,442	1,491	1,542	1,594	1,648
LOS PADRES	319	357	400	448	502	562	630
NACIMIENTO	2,852	2,885	2,918	2,952	2,986	3,020	3,055
NORTH COAST	7,097	7,380	7,809	8,264	8,746	9,256	9,797
Cambria	6,230	6,483	6,881	7,304	7,753	8,229	8,735
North Coast (Rural)	867	897	928	960	993	1,027	1,062
SALINAS RIVER	61,906	67,410	73,362	79,738	86,804	94,644	103,350
Atascadero	**25,079**	26,254	27484	28772	30120	31531	33009
Paso Robles	**23,517**	26,491	29,841	33,614	37,864	42,652	48,045
San Miguel	1,420	1,646	1,908	2,212	2,564	2,972	3,445
Santa Margarita	1,258	1,322	1,424	1,534	1,653	1,781	1,919
Templeton	4,607	5,551	6,435	7,210	8,078	9,051	10,141
Salinas River (Rural)	6,025	6,146	6,270	6,396	6,525	6,657	6,791
SAN LUIS BAY	49,167	52,126	55,270	58,613	62,167	65,946	69,967
Arroyo Grande	**15,668**	16,443	17,256	18,109	19,004	19,944	20,930
Avila Beach	300	328	359	392	429	469	513
Grover Beach	**13,057**	13,846	14,682	15,569	16,510	17,507	18,565
Oceano	7,244	7,877	8,565	9,314	10,128	11,013	11,976
Pismo Beach	**8,572**	9,085	9,629	10,206	10,817	11,465	12,152
San Luis Bay (Rural)	4,326	4,547	4,779	5,023	5,279	5,548	5,831
SAN LUIS OBISPO	46,102	48,567	51,167	53,909	56,803	59,856	63,078
San Luis Obispo (City)	**42,582**	44,754	47,037	49,436	51,958	54,608	57,394
San Luis Obispo (Rural)	3,520	3,813	4,130	4,473	4,845	5,248	5,684
SHANDON-CARRIZO	2,476	2,825	3,223	3,677	4,195	4,786	5,460
SOUTH COUNTY	21,464	23,592	25,945	28,548	31,428	34,616	38,147
Nipomo	12,612	14,131	15,833	17,740	19,876	22,269	24,950
Nipomo (Rural)	8,852	9,461	10,112	10,808	11,552	12,347	13,197
COUNTY TOTAL (Households only)	232,587	248,615	267,018	286,843	308,447	332,014	357,752
Incorporated Cities	**138,687**	147,526	157,043	167,300	178,368	190,325	203,258
Unincorporated Area	93,900	101,089	109,975	119,543	130,079	141,689	154,494
GROUP QUARTERS [2]	15,571	16,609	17,717	18,899	20,160	21,505	22,940
Incorporated Cities	4,816	5,137	5,480	5,846	6,236	6,652	7,096
Unincorporated Area	10,755	11,472	12,237	13,053	13,924	14,853	15,844
COUNTY TOTAL (Households + Group Qtrs)	**248,158**	265,224	284,735	305,742	328,607	353,519	380,692

1 Numbers in **bold** are from the California State Department of Finance.
2 Group quarters includes nursing homes, school dormitories, military barracks, prisons, jails, hospitals, etc.
Source: San Luis Obispo County Department of Planning and Building

Table B: Estimated Build-out Capacity[1] of the LUE (Inc. Cities) and Projected Build-out Dates		
PLANNING AREA or Community[2]	**Build-out Population[3]**	**Projected Build-out Date[4]**
ADELAIDA	3,136	1990
EL POMAR/ESTRELLA	7,603	2010
ESTERO	39,731	
Morro Bay[5]	12,200	2000
Cayucos	4,231	2020+
Los Osos	21,516	1995
Rural	1,784	1990
HUASNA-LOPEZ	1,516	2020+
LAS PILITAS	1,682	2005
LOS PADRES	1,191	2020+
NACIMIENTO	27,888	2020+
NORTH COAST	18,240	
Cambria	15,736	2020+
Rural	2,504	2020+
SALINAS RIVER	95,166	
Atascadero[5]	32,860	1995
Paso Robles[5]	38,670	2010
San Miguel	3,190	2020+
Santa Margarita	1,332	1990
Templeton	10,102	2020+
Rural	9,012	2015
SAN LUIS BAY	64,410	
Arroyo Grande[5]	19,388	1990
Avila Beach	1,721	2020+
Grover Beach[5]	16,000	2005
Oceano	15,220	2020+
Pismo Beach[5]	13,563	2020+
Rural	9,291	2020+
SAN LUIS OBISPO	56,570	
San Luis Obispo[5]	53,000	2015
Rural	3,570	1990
SHANDON-CARRIZO	53,691	2020+
SOUTH COUNTY	37,323	
Nipomo	25,700	2020+
Rural	11,623	1995
TOTAL BUILD-OUT	418,920	2020

Notes:

1. The build-out capacity estimates and population projections are subject to change through the development of new information through the Land Use Element update program or other research projects. Estimates may be revised periodically.
2. Community listings include all land within urban or village reserve lines, so that city expansion areas are included.
3. The build-out population represents the likely maximum population to inhabit each community or area, under current city and county general plans, given the factors discussed in Chapter 3. The following exceptions apply:
   A. The city of Morro Bay has enacted a development limit to equate to a population of 12,200 by the year 2000, which is listed in this table.
   B. The city of Pismo Beach has provided a 20-year population projection of 13,353 for the year 2008.
4. Projected dates are estimates rounded to thenearest five-year interval using population projects in Appendix A.
5. Incporated city and urban reserve expansion area.

Table C: Total Agricultural Valuations			
Year	**Valuation**	**Year**	**Valuation**
1976	93,381,440	1981	190,667,500
1977	92,698,600	1982	208,159,000
1978	128,160	1983	229,407,000
1979	147,849,600	1984	209,173,400
1980	160,053,300	1985	215,704,100
		1986	232,593,000

Source: San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioner's Annual Reports

Table D: Summary of Resource Management System Levels of Severity - 1992

PLANNING AREA	COMMUNITY	WATER SUPPLY	WATER SYSTEM	SEWAGE	ROADS	SCHOOLS	* AIR QUALITY
El Pomar/Estrella	Creston	I	-	-	-	(6) III	II
Estero	Cayucos	* II	-	-	-	III	II
	Los Osos/Baywood Park	II	II	III	(1) III	(2) III	II
Nacimiento	Heritage Ranch	-	II	-	(3) III	-	II
North Coast	Cambria	* II	III	-	(4) III	(5) III	II
	San Simeon Acres	III	-	-	-	III	II
Salinas River	Atascadero	-	-	-	-	(6) III	II
	Garden Farms	I	II	-	-	-	II
	Paso Robles	-	-	-	-	(7) III	II
	San Miguel	I	II	-	-	II	II
	Santa Margarita	I	III	-	-	(5) II	II
	Templeton	I	II	-	(8) III	(9) III	II
San Luis Bay	Arroyo Grande	-	-	-	-	(10) III	II
	Avila Beach	III	-	II	(11) III	(17) II	II
	Grover Beach	-	-	-	-	(10) III	II
	Oceano	II	-	-	-	(10) III	II
	Pismo Beach	-	-	-	-	(10) III	II
SLO	SLO Urban Area	-	-	-	(12) III	(13) III	II
	Los Ranchos/Edna	II	-	(14) III	-	(13) III	II
Shandon/ Carrizo	Carrisa Plains	-	-	-	-	(5) III	II
	Shandon	I	-	-	-	-	II
South County	Nipomo	II	-	-	(15) III	(16) II	II
Groundwater Basins	Cuyama Valley	III					
	Los Osos Valley	II					
	North Coast Area	II					
	Paso Robles	I					
	San Luis Obispo Creek	II					
	S.Maria: Tri-Cities Mesa	II					
	Nipomo Mesa	II					
	Santa Maria Valley	III					

See notes on reverse side of this page for additional details about levels of severity.
For more information, refer to the **1992 Annual Resource Summary Report**.

Table D: **Summary of Resource Management System Levels of Severity - 1992**

Notes

* Level of severity certified by the Board of Supervisors. (All others are recommended levels of severity, not yet certified by the Board.)

1. Los Osos Valley Road and South Bay Boulevard.
2. Elementary schools. (Middle school is level I.)
3. Nacimiento Lake Drive.
4. Main Street.
5. Elementary school(s).
6. Elementary schools and middle school. (High school is level II.)
7. Elementary and Middle schools.
8. Las Tablas Road. (Vineyard Drive, west of Hwy 101, is level II.)
9. Elementary schools and middle school. (High school is level II.)
10. Elementary, Junior high and high schools.
11. Avila Beach Drive.
12. Tank Farm Road.
13. Elementary schools and middle school.
14. Treatment plant effluent exceeds salt and TDS standards due to discharge from residential water softeners.
15. Tefft Street.
16. Junior high and high school. (Elementary schools are level I.)
17. Middle school. (Elementary school is level II.)

E: UPDATE OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT AREA PLANS

I. Plan Update Process

Several steps are involved in updating Framework for Planning and each area plan, as follows:

Data gathering and issue identification

1. Review statistical data, such as population projections, economic base, land development trends, changes in population density and building intensity, and resource usage.

2. Review any measures that were previously adopted to implement the general plan and mitigate adverse environmental impacts.

3. Survey community opinion and identify land use, economic, and environmental issues.

4. Hold public meetings and workshops, including meeting with commmunity advisory committees, to discuss area issues and gain public input on possible amendments and the scope of the update.

5. Prepare a scope of work and project schedule for Board of Supervisors approval addressing the preparation of the plan update and environmental review document in response to data collection, public participation, and funding.

Plan and environmental document preparation

6. Prepare environmental and economic data base for area plan, identify environmental constraints to be considered in plan development.

7. Consider if potential impacts resulting from submitted citizen requests could be significant.

8. Concurrently prepare a coordinated draft plan and environmental review document, hold public workshops to review the economic and environmental analysis and draft plan alternatives.

9. Complete preparation of the hearing draft plan and a coordinated environmental document.

10. Prepare a staff report for the hearing draft plan in response to public comments and proposed mitigation measures in the environmental document.

11. Schedule Planning Commission public hearings on the draft plan and coordinated environmental document; Planning Commission to prepare recommendation to Board of Supervisors.

12. Schedule Board of Supervisors public hearings on Planning Commission recommended draft plan and environmental document and adoption of the final plan and environmental review documents; Board of Supervisors adoption of plan update.

13. Prepare and distribute public copies of the final plan and amended official maps.

II. Processing Individual Property Owner Requests for Changes During a General Plan Update Process.

The following procedure is to be followed in processing property owner requests for changes as part of a general plan update:

1. **Initial meeting.** Before submitting a property owner request for changes, applicants are encouraged to meet with staff of the Department of Planning and Building, and the Environmental Coordinator, to identify critical issues and possible alternatives to the request. In order to assist the applicant in making a decision on how to proceed, the applicant should be advised during the meeting if the proposed application has little likelihood for ultimate approval. Staff can also assist in completing the application, explaining the timing of the update, and locating supporting information.

2. **Property request filing.** The request is filed with the Department of Planning and Building on the required forms, accompanied by the filing fee established by the Board of Supervisors and any additional information described in the application package.

3. **Acceptance for processing in update.** After the request is determined to be complete and is accepted for consideration during the general plan update, the Department of Planning and Building notifies the applicant in writing.

4. **Consideration of property request for changes as part of an update.** During the analysis of proposed changes during the update, staff prepares a report that is a preliminary analysis of the major issues likely to be involved in the request including items that may need to be studied in more detail. The county considers the following factors and any other issues raised by the proposal:

    a. **Necessity.** Relationship to other existing LUE policies, including the guidelines for land use category amendments in Chapter 6, to determine if those policies make the proposed amendment unnecessary or inappropriate.

    b. **Timing.** Whether the proposed change is unnecessary or premature in relation to the inventory of similarly designated land, the amount and nature of similar requests, and the timing of projected growth.

    c. **Vicinity.** Relationship of the site to the surrounding area to determine if the area of the proposed change should be expanded or reduced in order to consider surrounding physical conditions. These may include resource availability, environmental constraints, and carrying capacity for the area in the evaluation.

    d. **Cumulative effects of the request.** Individual property owner requests for changes are evaluated in view of existing buildout, current population and resource capacity conditions, and other important information developed as part of the update process.

5. **Environmental Determination.** If it is determined that an area plan requires preparation of an EIR, all property owner request(s) submitted prior to a board-

approved scope of work should be included for consideration in the area plan EIR. If the private request is submitted subsequent to the scope of work approval date, the request will be included in the area plan update if it is an insignificant change that will not result in a change to the approved scope of work or substantial time delay. On the other hand, major citizen requests that could result in potentially significant impacts, will not be included in the area plan update at this point and will need to follow the procedure outlined in Appendix F.

If it is determined that an area plan update, by itself, qualifies for a negative declaration, private requests shall only be included if they are minor changes that would not result in significant impacts. All other requests that could result in potentially significant impacts will need to follow the procedure outlined in Appendix F.

6. **Review and public hearing process.** When the environmental review process is complete, the updated plan is scheduled for public hearings before the county Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors.

7. **Report progress of update.** Progress reports should be provided in at least six-month intervals to allow for careful monitoring of the update process.

F: PROCESSING INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY REQUESTS FOR CHANGES NOT DURING A GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

Processing of amendments when not part of General Plan Update

The following procedure is to be followed in processing individual general plan amendment applications when not part of an update:

1. **Pre-application conference.** Before filing a plan amendment application, applicants are encouraged to meet with staff of the Department of Planning and Building, and the Environmental Coordinator, to identify critical issues raised by the proposed application as well as possible alternatives. During the meeting, the applicant should also be advised on opportunities and constraints to ultimate project approval and on how to proceed. Staff can also assist in completing the application, explaining fees, and locating supporting information.

2. **Application filing.** The request is filed with the Department of Planning and Building on the required forms, accompanied by the filing fee established by the Board of Supervisors, and any additional information described on the application form.

3. **Application acceptance and Board of Supervisors authorization to proceed.** After the application is determined to be complete and is accepted for processing, the Department of Planning and Building prepares a report that is a preliminary analysis of the major issues likely to be involved in the request and the items that need to be studied in more detail. The Board of Supervisors reviews the report in a public meeting and decides whether to authorize processing of the application. The Board should consider the following factors and any other issues raised by the proposal:

    a. **Necessity.** Relationship to other existing policies, including the guidelines for land use category amendments in Chapter 6, to determine if those policies make the proposed amendment unnecessary or inappropriate.

    b. **Timing.** Whether the proposed amendment is unnecessary or premature in relation to the inventory of similarly designated land and the timing of projected growth.

    c. **Vicinity.** Relationship of the site to the surrounding area to determine if the area of the proposed amendment should be expanded or reduced in order to consider surrounding conditions in the evaluation.

4. **Environmental Determination.** The proposed amendments will be reviewed by the Office of the Environmental Coordinator for an environmental determination pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The review may result in either (1) the project being given an exemption, (2) the issuance of a negative declaration stating the project will not have a negative effect on the environment, or (3) the recommendation by the Environmental Coordinator to the Board of Supervisors that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) be prepared to identify any significant environmental impacts and appropriate mitigation measures and alternate actions. When complete, the environmental document is reviewed and considered prior to action on the proposed amendments.

5. **Review by Department of Planning and Building.** The Department of Planning and Building reviews the request by considering the guidelines for Land Use Element text and map amendments listed in Chapter 6 in addition to the factors listed in item 3 above. A staff report will then be prepared with a recommendation to the Planning Commission.

6. **Planning Commission hearing.** The staff report and any accompanying environmental documents are placed on the next available Planning Commission agenda for consideration. Notice of the hearing is provided as required by Sections 65353 and 65854 of the Government Code, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Section 13515, and Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq (CEQA).

   At the close of the public hearing, the Planning Commission considers the proposal and recommends or reports to the Board of Supervisors what action should be taken. A vote to recommend approval of an amendment shall be by resolution of the Commission and must be carried by an affirmative vote of not less than a majority of the total voting members of the Commission. Without the required votes for a recommendation for approval, the proposed amendment is transmitted to the Board of Supervisors as a report of the Planning Commission action on the proposed amendment.

7. **Board of Supervisors hearing.** The Board of Supervisors holds a public hearing on the proposed amendment, advertised in accordance with Government Code Section 65353 and 65854, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Section 13515, and Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq (CEQA). At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Board may approve, modify or disapprove the recommendation of the Planning Commission in accordance with Government Code Sections 65354 through 65356 and 65854 through 65857. Approval of the amendment shall be by the affirmative vote of not less than a majority of the total membership of the Board. Any substantial modification to the proposed amendment that was not previously considered by the Planning Commission shall first be referred to the Commission for its recommendation, in accordance with Government Code Sections 65356 and 65857.

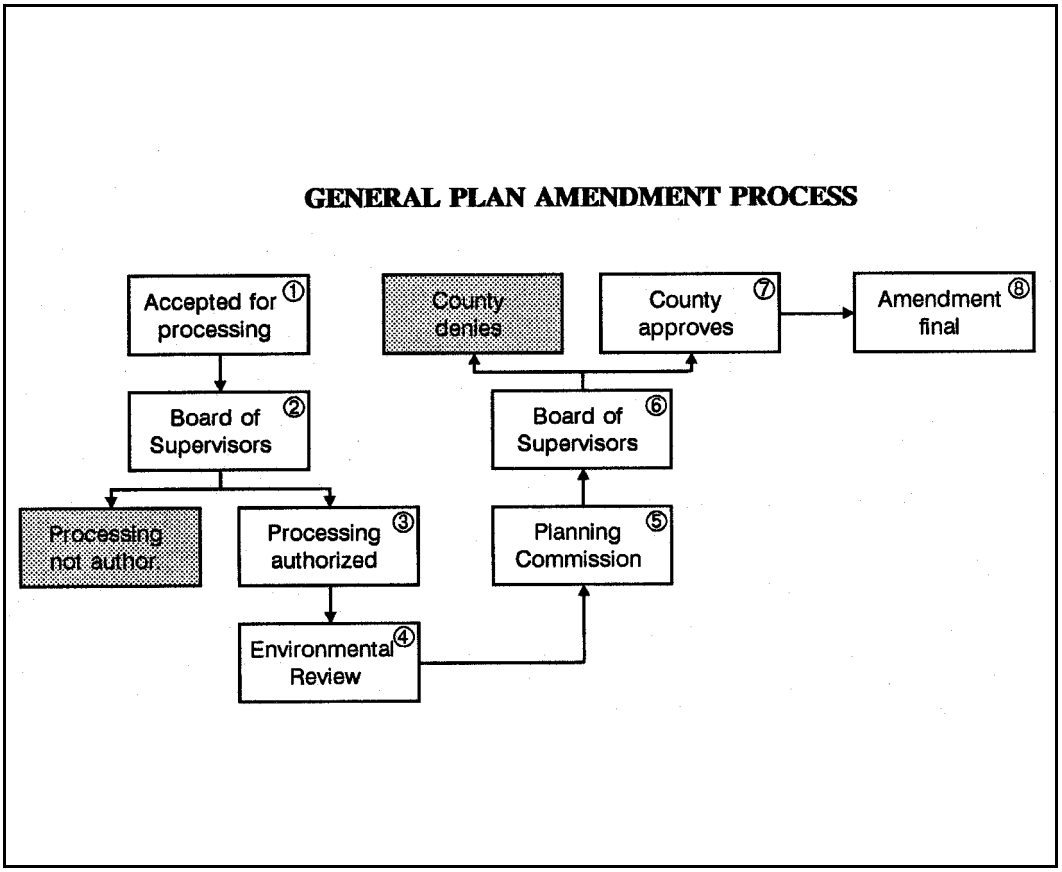


Figure A-1: General Plan Amendment Process